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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **12210 Luckey Summit**  **San Antonio, TX 78252**  **United States of America**  **© 2022**  [**https://www.betemunah.org/**](https://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2022**  [**https://torahfocus.com/**](https://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

**Triennial Cycle (Triennial Torah Cycle) / Septennial Cycle (Septennial Torah Cycle)**

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| **Three- and 1/2-year Lectionary Readings** | **Second Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Iyar 3, 5784[[1]](#footnote-1) – May 10/11, 2024** | **Secund Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:** [**https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm**](https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm)

**Roll of Honor:**

This Commentary comes out weekly and on the festivals thanks to the great generosity of:

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

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His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

**For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that GOD’s richest blessings be upon their lives and those of their loved ones, together with all Yisrael and her Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!**

**Also, a great thank you and great blessings be upon all who send comments to the list about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics**.

**If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

We pray for our beloved ***Hakham His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai***. Mi Sheberach…He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David, and Solomon, may He bless and heal HE Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him. And may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit, swiftly and soon, and we will say amen ve amen!

**A Prayer for Israel**

Our Father in Heaven, Rock, and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first manifestation of the approach of our redemption. Shield it with Your lovingkindness, envelop it in Your peace, and bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers, and advisors, and grace them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory. Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness.

Lead them, swiftly and upright, to Your city Zion and to Jerusalem, the abode of Your Name, as is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: “Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers.” Draw our hearts together to revere and venerate Your name and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah, and send us quickly the Messiah son of David, agent of Your vindication, to redeem those who await Your deliverance.

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

**·** The Altar of Incense – Exodus 30:1-10

**·** The Law of the Shekel – Exodus 30:11-16

**·** The Laver – Exodus 30:17-21

**·** The Anointing Oil – Exodus 30:22-33

**·** The Holy Incense – Exodus 30:34-38

**Shabbat: “VaAsita Mitzbeach” – “You will make an altar”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְעָשִׂיתָ מִזְבֵּחַ** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“VaAsita Mitzbeach”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 30:1-5 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 31:1-4 |
| **“And you will make an altar”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 30:6-10 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 31:5-7 |
| **“Y harás un altar”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 30:11-16 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 31:8-10 |
|  | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 30:17-21 |  |
| Sh’mot (Exodus) 30:1-38 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 30:22-25 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 66:1-20 | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 30:26-33 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 31:1-4 |
| Ashlamatah:  Malachi 1:11 – 2:7 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 30:34-38 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 31:5-7 |
|  | Maftir – Sh’mot 30:34-38 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 31:8-10 |
| Mark 8:22-26 | Malachi 1:11 – 2:7 |  |

**Welcome to the World of Pshat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the Pshat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the Pshat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R>]:

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

Thirteen rules compiled by Rabbi Ishmael b. Elisha for the elucidation of the Torah and for making halakic deductions from it. They are, strictly speaking, mere amplifications of the seven Rules of Hillel, and are collected in the Baraita of R. Ishmael, forming the introduction to the Sifra and reading as follows:

**1. Ḳal wa-ḥomer**: Identical with the first rule of Hillel.

**2. Gezerah shawah**: Identical with the second rule of Hillel.

**3. Binyan ab**: Rules deduced from a single passage of Scripture and rules deduced from two passages. This rule is a combination of the third and fourth rules of Hillel.

**4. Kelal u-Peraṭ**: The general and the particular.

**5. u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The particular and the general.

**6. Kelal u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The general, the particular, and the general.

7. The general which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.

8. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.

9. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.

10. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.

11. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.

12. Deduction from the context.

13. When two Biblical passages contradict each other the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.

Rules seven to eleven are formed by a subdivision of the fifth rule of Hillel; rule twelve corresponds to the seventh rule of Hillel, but is amplified in certain particulars; rule thirteen does not occur in Hillel, while, on the other hand, the sixth rule of Hillel is omitted by Ishmael. With regard to the rules and their application in general. These rules are found also on the morning prayers of any Jewish Orthodox Siddur.

**Friday evening: Counting of the Omer Day 18**

Today is eighteen days, which is two weeks and four days of the Omer.

Netzach ShebeTiferet

**Then read the following:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| **18** | **Darshan/Parnas 1** | **Iyar 3** | **3:20-21** | **Compassion united with Confidence** |

**Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to Him (G-d) who by his virtuous power can do inexhaustibly more than we can ask[[2]](#footnote-2) or think, according to the virtuous power working[[3]](#footnote-3) within us,to Him (G-d) be glory[[4]](#footnote-4) in the Congregation and in Yeshua HaMashiach throughout every generation, forever and ever. Amen.**

## Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Shemot (Exodus) 30:1-38

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **You shall make an altar** for bringing incense up in smoke; you shall make it out of acacia wood. | 1. ¶ **And you will make an altar** on which to burn incense of perfumes: of sitta wood will you make it. |
| 2. It shall be one cubit long and one cubit wide, a square, and two cubits high; its horns shall be [one piece] with it. | 2. A cubit its length, and a cubit its breadth; foursquare will it be: and two cubits its height: and its upright horns will be of it. |
| 3. You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top, its walls all around, and its horns; and you shall make for it a golden crown all around. | 3. And you will overlay it with pure gold, its top, and its wall round about, and its horns; and make for it a border of gold round about. |
| 4. You shall make two golden rings for it underneath its crown on its two corners, you shall make [them] on its two sides, so that it should serve as holders for poles with which to carry it. | 4. And two golden rings make you for it beneath its border at the two corners, you will make upon its two sides, to be the place for the staves by which it may be carried. |
| 5. You shall make the poles out of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. | 5. And you will make the staves of sitta wood, and cover them with gold. |
| 6. And you shall place it in front of the dividing curtain, which is upon the Ark of Testimony, in front of the ark cover, which is upon the testimony, where I will arrange to meet with you. | 6. And you will place it before the veil which is over the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, where I will appoint My Word to be with you. |
| 7. Aaron shall make incense of spices go up in smoke upon it; every morning when he sets the lamps in order, he shall make it go up in smoke. | 7. And Aharon will burn sweet incense upon it from morning to morning: when he orders the lamps, he will burn it. |
| 8. And when Aaron **kindles the lights in the afternoon**, he shall make it go up in smoke, continual incense before the Lord for your generations. | 8. And when Aharon **kindles the lamps between the evenings**, he will burn sweet incense perpetually before the Lord in your generations. |
| 9. You shall offer up on it no alien incense, burnt offering, or meal offering, and you shall pour no libation upon it. | 9. You will not offer thereon the sweet incense of strange peoples, nor offer upon it burnt offerings, or minchas, nor pour libations. |
| 10. But Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year; with the blood of the sin offering of the atonements, once a year he shall effect atonement upon it for your generations; it is a holy of holies to the Lord. | 10. And Aharon will expiate upon its horns once in the year with the blood of the sin offering for an expiation: once in the year will he make atonement upon it on the day of atonement in your generations: it will be most holy before the LORD. |
| 11. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: | 11. ¶ And the LORD spoke unto Mosheh, saying, |
| 12. "When you take the sum of the children of Israel according to their numbers, let each one give to the Lord an atonement for his soul when they are counted; then there will be no plague among them when they are counted. | 12. When you take the sum of the sons of Israel according to their number, they will give every man the ransom of their souls before the LORD when you number them; that there may not be among them the calamity of death when you do number them.  JERUSALEM: When you take the head of the number of the sums of the sons of Israel. |
| 13. This they shall give, everyone who goes through the counting: half a shekel according to the holy shekel. Twenty gerahs equal one shekel; half of [such] a shekel shall be an offering to the Lord. | 13. This valuation was shown to Mosheh in the mountain as with a denarius of fire, and thus spoke He to him: |
| 14. Everyone who goes through the counting, from the age of twenty and upward, shall give an offering to the Lord. | 14. So will everyone who passes to the numbering give a half shekel of the coin of the sanctuary: (a half shekel is twenty manin:) the half shekel is to be the separation before the LORD. Everyone who passes to the numbering, from a son of twenty years and upwards, will give the separation before the LORD. |
| 15. The rich shall give no more, and the poor shall give no less than half a shekel, with which to give the offering to the Lord, to atone for your souls. | 15. He who is rich will not add to, and he who is poor will not diminish from, the half shekel in giving the separation before the LORD, to atone for your souls. |
| 16. You shall take the silver of the atonements from the children of Israel and use it for the work of the Tent of Meeting; it shall be a remembrance for the children of Israel before the Lord, to atone for your souls." | 16. And you will take the silver of the ransom from the sons of Israel, and apply it to the work of the tabernacle of ordinance; that it may be for the sons of Israel for a good memorial before the LORD, as a ransom for your souls. |
| 17. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: | 17.  ¶ And the LORD spoke to Mosheh, saying, |
| 18. "You shall make a washstand of copper and its base of copper for washing, and you shall place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and you shall put water therein. | 18. And you will make a laver of brass, and its foundation of brass, for purification; and will set it between the tabernacle of ordinance and the altar, and put water therein. |
| 19. Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet from it. | 19. And they will take from it for a cleansing ablution. And Aharon and his sons will sanctify their hands and their feet with its water; |
| 20. When they enter the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to serve, to make a fire offering rise up in smoke to the Lord, | 20. at the time of their entering into the tabernacle of ordinance they will sanctify with water, that they die not by the fiery flame \_\_\_ |
| 21. they shall wash their hands and feet so that they will not die; this shall be for them a perpetual statute, for him and for his descendants, for their generations." | 21. \_\_\_\_ and it will be to them an everlasting statute, to him and to his sons in their generations. |
| 22. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: | 22. ¶ And the LORD spoke to Mosheh, saying, |
| 23. "And you, take for yourself spices of the finest sort: of pure myrrh five hundred [shekel weights]; of fragrant cinnamon half of it two hundred and fifty [shekel weights]; of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty [shekel weights], | 23. And you also take to yourself the first aromatics, choice myrrh, in weight five hundred minas, and sweet cinnamon of half the weight, two hundred and fifty minas, |
| 24. and of cassia five hundred [shekel weights] according to the holy shekel, and one hin of olive oil. | 24. and sweet calamus in weight two hundred and fifty minas and cassia in weight five hundred minas of shekels, in the shekel of the sanctuary, and olive oil a vase full, in weight twelve logs, a log for each tribe of the twelve tribes.  JERUSALEM: And you take to yourself the chief goodly spices, choice myrrh, in weight five hundred minas of shekels. |
| 25. You shall make this into an oil of holy anointment, a perfumed compound according to the art of a perfumer; it shall be an oil of holy anointment. | 25. And you will make of it a holy anointing oil, perfumed with perfume, the work of the perfumer, of compounded perfumes: a holy anointing oil will it be.  JERUSALEM: Balsam, spikenard-myrrh, and galbanum. commixed. |
| 26. And you shall anoint with it the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of Testimony, | 26. And with it anoint you the tabernacle of ordinance, and the ark of the testimony, |
| 27. the table and all its implements, the menorah and its implements, the altar of incense, | 27. and the table and all its vessels, and the candelabrum and its vessels, and the altar of sweet incense, |
| 28. the altar of the burnt offering and all its implements, the washstand and its base. | 28. and the altar of burnt offering and all its vessels, and the laver and its foundation, |
| 29. And you shall sanctify them so that they become a holy of holies; whatever touches them shall become holy. | 29. and consecrate them, and they will be most holy. Every one of the priests who approaches to them will be sanctified; but of the rest of the tribes, (whoever touches them) will be consumed by the fiery flame from before the LORD. |
| 30. And with it you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them to serve Me [as kohanim]. | 30. But Aharon and his sons anoint you, and consecrate them to minister before Me. |
| 31. And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying: 'This shall be oil of holy anointment to Me for your generations. | 31. And speak you to the sons of Israel, saying, This will be a holy anointing oil before Me unto your generations. |
| 32. It shall not be poured upon human flesh, and according to its formula you shall not make anything like it. It is holy; it shall be holy to you. | 32. Upon the flesh of man it may not be poured, and the like of it you will not make to resemble it; unto you it will be most sacred. |
| 33. Any person who compounds anything like it or puts any of it on an alien shall be cut off from his people.' " | 33. The man who compounds the like of it, or puts it upon the unconsecrated who are not of the sons of Aharon, will be destroyed from his people. |
| 34. And the Lord said to Moses: "Take for yourself aromatics, [namely] balsam sap, onycha and galbanum, aromatics and pure frankincense; they shall be of equal weight. | 34. ¶ And the LORD said to Mosheh, Take to yourself spices, balsam, and onycha, and galbanum, choice spices, and pure frankincense, weight for weight will it be. |
| 35. And you shall make it into incense, a compound according to the art of the perfumer, well blended, pure, holy. | 35. And compound therewith a fragrant incense, the work of the compounder, a pure and sacred mixture. |
| 36. And you shall crush some of it very finely, and you shall set some of it before the testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I will arrange meetings with you; it shall be to you a holy of holies. | 36. And beat, and make it small, and of it some will you put before the testimony in the tabernacle of ordinance, where I will appoint My Word to be with you. Most sacred will it be to you. |
| 37. And the incense that you make, you shall not make for yourselves according to its formula; it shall be holy to you for the Lord. | 37. And of the sweet incense you will make, the like will not be made among you; it will be sacred to you before the LORD: |
| 38. Any person who makes anything like it, to smell it[s fragrance], shall be cut off from his people. | 38. the man who makes the like of it to smell thereto will be destroyed from his people. |

**Reading Assignment**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  Exodus - VI Vol. 9 – “The Tabernacle”  **pp. 260 - 331** | **Ramban: Exodus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1973)  **pp. 507 - 541** |

#### Rashi’s Commentary for: Shemot (Exodus) 30:1-38

**1** **for bringing incense up in smoke** Heb. מִקְטַר קְטֽרֶת, to raise smoke up on it, namely the smoke of incense.

**3** **its top** This one [altar] had a top. The altar for burnt offerings [i.e., the copper altar], however, did not have a top, but the hollow space within it was filled with earth whenever they camped.

**a golden crown** This symbolized the crown of the kehunah.

**4** **its… corners** Heb. צַלְעֽתָיו. Here it is a term meaning corners, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders, [unlike in Exod. 25:12, 26:20, 26, 27, whereצֶלַע  means a side,] because it says [further in the verse]: “on its two sides,” [meaning] on its two corners that are on its two sides.

**it should serve** Heb. וְהָיָה, lit., and it shall be [in the singular, referring to] the making of these rings.

**as holders for the poles** The ring [itself] shall be a holder for a pole.

**6** **in front of the dividing curtain** Perhaps you will say [that the altar should be] removed or at a distance opposite the ark, either to the north or to the south. Therefore, the Torah says: “in front of the ark cover,” meaning directly opposite the ark on the outside [of the Holy of Holies]. -[from Baraitha Melecheth HaMishkan, ch. 4,]

**7** **when he sets… in order** Heb. בְּהֵיטִיבוֹ, a word referring to the cleaning of the cups of the menorah from the ashes of the wicks that burned at night. He would clean them every morning.

**the lamps** Heb. הַנֵּרֽת. luzes, lozes, luses, luces in Old French, [i.e.,] lamps. This is true of all נֵרוֹת mentioned in the context of the menorah, except where הַעֲלָאָה, which is an expression of kindling, is mentioned.

**8** **And when… kindles** Heb. וּבְהַעֲלֽת, lit., and when… causes to ascend. When he will kindle them to cause their flame to ascend.

**he shall make it go up in smoke** Every day, one pras in the morning and [one] pras in the afternoon. -[from Ker. 6b]

**9** **You shall offer up on it** On this [golden] altar.

**alien incense** Any donated incense; they are all alien except for this one. -[from Men. 50a, b]

**burnt offering, or meal offering** Neither burnt offerings nor meal offerings. A burnt offering is one of an animal or fowl. A meal offering is one of bread.

**10** **But Aaron shall make atonement** [This refers to] applications of blood [on the horns of the altar].

**once a year** On Yom Kippur. This is what is stated in [parshath] “Acharei Moth”: “And he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement upon it” (Lev. 16:18).

**the sin offering of the atonements** They are the bull and the kid of Yom Kippur, which atone for ritual contamination regarding the sanctuary and its holy things. -[from Shevuoth 2b]

**a holy of holies** Heb. קֽדֶשׁ-קָדָשִׁים. The altar is sanctified for these things only, and for no other service.

**12** **When you take** Heb. כִּי תִשָׂא. [This is] an expression of taking, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders. [I.e.,] **when you wish to take the sum [total] of their numbers to know how many they are, do not count them by the head, but each one shall give a half-shekel, and you shall count the shekels. [Thereby] you will know their number.**

**then there will be no plague among them** **for the evil eye has power over numbered things, and pestilence comes upon them, as we find in David’s time (II Sam. 24).**

**13** **This they shall give**He [God] showed him [Moses] a sort of coin of fire weighing half a shekel, and He said to him, “Like this one they shall give.” -[from Tanchuma 9; Tanchuma Buber, Naso p. 35; Pesikta d’Rav Kahana 19a; Midrash Psalms 91:1; Yerushalmi, Shekalim 1:4]

**who goes through the counting** Heb. הָעֽבֵר עַל-הַפְקֻדִים. It is customary for those who count to pass the ones who have been counted one following another, and so [too the word יַעֲבֽר  in] “each one that passes under the rod” (Lev. 27:32), and so [the wordתַּעֲבֽרְנָה  in] “flocks will again pass under the hands of one who counts them” (Jer. 33:13).

**half a shekel according to the holy shekel** By the weight of the shekel that I fixed for you [against which] to weigh the holy shekels, such as the shekels mentioned in the section dealing with personal evaluations (Lev. 27:1-8) and [in the section concerning] inherited fields (Lev. 27:16- 21).

**Twenty gerahs equal one shekel** Now He explains to you how much it is.

**gerahs** Heb. גֵרָה, a word meaning a ma’ah [a small coin]. Likewise, “will come to prostrate himself before him for a silver piece (אֲגוֹרַתכֶּסֶף)  and a morsel of bread” (I Sam. 2:36).

**Twenty gerahs equal one shekel** for a whole shekel equals four zuzim, and the zuz was originally five ma’oth, but they came and added a sixth to it and raised it to six ma’oth of silver, and half of this shekel [of] which I have spoken to you [here in this verse], they shall give as an offering to the Lord.

**14** **from the age of twenty and upward** [The Torah] teaches you here that no one under twenty years old goes out [to serve] in the army or is counted among men.

**15** **to atone for your souls** That they should not be struck by a plague because of the counting. Another explanation:

**to atone for your souls** [This was written] because [God] hinted to them [the Israelites] here [about] three offerings, because “an offering to the Lord” is written here three times. The first [represents] the offering [of silver] for the sockets [of the Mishkan], for he [Moses] counted them when they commenced with the donations for the Mishkan. Everyone gave a half-shekel, amounting to one hundred talents, as it is said: “And the silver of the community census was one hundred talents” (Exod. 38:25). The sockets were made from this, as it is said: “One hundred talents of the silver was [used to cast the sockets of the Mishkan and the sockets of the dividing curtain]” (Exod. 38:27). The second [offering mentioned here] was also [collected] through counting, for he [Moses] counted them after the Mishkan was erected. This is the counting mentioned in the beginning of the Book of Numbers: “on the first of the second month in the second year” (Num. 1:1). [For this offering] everyone gave a half-shekel, [the total of] which was [earmarked] for the purchase of communal sacrifices for every year. The rich and poor were equal in them [i.e., they gave equally in these two offerings]. Concerning that [second] offering, it is said: “to atone for your souls,” because the sacrifices are brought for the purpose of atonement. The third one [offering] is the offering for the Mishkan, as it is said: “Whoever set aside an offering of silver or copper” (Exod. 35:24). In this [offering] not everyone gave the same amount, but each one [gave] according to what his heart inspired him to give. -[from Shekalim 2b]

**16 and use it for the work of the Tent of Meeting [From this] you learn that they were commanded to count them at the beginning of the donation for the Mishkan after the incident of the calf.** [They were commanded then] because a plague had befallen them, as it is said: “And the Lord plagued the people” (Exod. 32:35). This can be compared to a flock of sheep, treasured by its owner, which was stricken with pestilence. When it [the pestilence] was over, he [the owner] said to the shepherd, “Please count my sheep to know how many are left,” in order to make it known that he treasured it [the flock] (Tanchuma, Ki Thissa 9). It is, however, impossible to say that this counting [mentioned here] was the [same] one mentioned in the Book of Numbers, for in that one [counting] it says: “on the first of the second month” (Num. 1:1), and the Mishkan was erected on the first [day] of the first month, as it is said: On the day of the first month, on the first of the month, you shall erect, etc. (Exod. 40:2). The sockets were made from shekels realized from that counting, as it is said: “One hundred talents of the silver were used to cast, etc.” (Exod. 38:27). Thus you learn that they [the countings] were two—one at the beginning of their donation [to the Mishkan] after Yom Kippur in the first year [after the Exodus], and one in the second year in Iyar after the Mishkan had been erected. Now if you ask, how is it possible that in both of these countings the Israelites equaled six hundred three thousand, five hundred fifty? In the case of the silver of the community census, it says this number, and also in the Book of Numbers it says the same: “And all the counted ones were six hundred three thousand, five hundred fifty” (Num. 1:46). Were they [the countings] not in two [separate] years? It is impossible that in the first census there were none who were nineteen years old and consequently not counted, and by the second counting became twenty years old [and were counted]. The answer to this matter is that in the context of the ages of people, they were counted in the same year, but in the context of the Exodus they [the two dates] were two [separate] years, since [to figure the time] from the Exodus, we count from [the month of] Nissan, as we learned in [tractate] Rosh Hashanah (2b). In this context, the Mishkan was built in the first year [after the Exodus] and erected in the second year, for the new year started on the first of Nissan. People’s ages, however, are counted according to the number of years of the world, beginning with [the month of] Tishri. Thus, the two countings were [taken] in the same year. The first counting was in Tishri after Yom Kippur, when the Omnipresent was placated toward Israel to forgive them, and they were commanded concerning [building] the Mishkan. The second one [counting] was on the first of Iyar. -[from Num. Rabbah 1:10]

**for the work of the Tent of Meeting** These are the sockets made from it [i.e., from the silver of the atonements].

**18** **a washstand** Like a sort of large caldron, which has faucets allowing water to pour out through their openings.

**and its base** Heb. וְכַנּוֹ, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: וּבְסִיסֵיהּ, a seat prepared for the washstand.

**for washing** This refers back to the washstand.

**between… the altar** [This refers to] the altar for burnt offerings, about which it is written that it was in front of the entrance of the Mishkan of the Tent of Meeting. The washstand was drawn away slightly [from the entrance] and stood opposite the space between the altar and the Mishkan, but it did not intervene at all [between them], because it is said: “And he placed the altar for burnt offerings at the entrance of the Mishkan of the Tent of Meeting” (Exod. 40:29), implying that the altar was in front of the Tent of Meeting, but the washstand was not in front of the Tent of Meeting. How is that so? It [the washstand] was drawn away slightly to the south. So, it is taught in Zev. (59a).

**19** **their hands and feet** He [the kohen] would wash his hands and feet simultaneously. So, we learned in Zev. (19b): How was the washing of the hands and the feet [performed]? [The kohen] would lay his right hand on his right foot and his left hand on his left foot and wash [in this manner].

**20** **When they enter the Tent of Meeting** to bring the incense up in smoke in the morning and in the afternoon, or to sprinkle some of the blood of the bull of the anointed Kohen [Gadol, who erred in his halachic decision and practiced according to that erroneous decision,] (Lev. 4:3-12) and the blood of the kids for [sin offerings for having engaged in] idolatry (Num. 15:22-26).

**so that they will not die** This implies that if they do not wash, they will die. For in the Torah [there] are stated implications, and from the negative implication you [can] understand the positive.

**the altar** [I.e.,] the outer [altar], in which no entry to the Tent of Meeting is involved, only [entry] into the courtyard.

**21** **so that they will not die** [This verse is written] to impose death upon one who serves on the altar when his hands and feet are not washed, for from the first death penalty (verse 20) we understand only [that death is imposed] upon one who enters the Temple.

**23** **spices of the finest sort** Heb. בְּשָׂמִים רֽאשׁ, of high quality.

**fragrant cinnamon** Since cinnamon is the bark of a tree, and there is one good type [of cinnamon] that has a fragrant bouquet and a good taste, and there is another that is merely like wood, it was necessary to state “fragrant cinnamon,” [meaning that the incense was to be made] of the good species.

**half of it two hundred and fifty [shekel weights]** Half of the amount to be brought shall be two hundred and fifty; thus, altogether it is five hundred [shekel weights], like the amount of pure myrrh. If so, why was it stated in halves? This is a Scriptural decree to bring it in halves to add to it two overweights, because we do not weigh [the spices] exactly. So, it was taught in Kereithoth (5a).

**fragrant cane** Heb. וּקְנֵה-בֽשֶׂם, cane of spice. Since there are canes that are not of spice, it is necessary to specify: בֽשֶׂם

**two hundred and fifty [shekel weights]** [This is] its total sum.

**24** **and of cassia** Heb. וְקִדָּה, the name of the root of an herb, and in the language of the Sages:  קְצִיעָה, cassia. -[from Ker. 6a]

**hin** [The equivalent of] twelve logs. The Sages of Israel differ concerning it [i.e., how the oil was made]. Rabbi Meir says: They [whoever made the anointing oil] boiled the roots in it [the oil of the anointment]. Rabbi Judah said to him: But is it not so that it [the anointment oil] did not even suffice to anoint the roots [and thus they certainly couldn’t boil the spices in the oil]? Rather, they soaked them [the spices] in water so that they would not absorb the oil, and then poured the oil on them until they were impregnated with the scent, and [then] they wiped the oil off the roots. -[from Ker. 5a]

**25** **a perfumed compound** Heb. רֽקַח מִרְקַחַת.רֽקַח  is a noun, and the accent, which is on the first syllable, proves that. It is like רֶקַע רֶגַע, but it is not like “Who wrinkles(רֽגַע)  the sea” (Isa. 51:15), or like “Who spread out(רֽקַע)  the earth” (Isa. 42:5) [which are both verbs], because [in those instances] the accent is at the end of the word. Any substance mixed with another substance until one becomes impregnated from the other with either scent or taste is called מִרְקַחַת.

**a perfumed compound** Heb. רֽקַח מִרְקַחַת, a compound made through the skill of mixing.

**according to the art of a perfumer** Heb. רֽקֵחַ, the name of the craftsman in this field.

**26** **And you shall anoint with it** All anointments were in the shape of the Greek [letter] “chaff,” except those of the kings, which were like a sort of crown. -[from Ker. 5b]

**29** **And you shall sanctify them** This anointment sanctifies them to be a holy of holies. And what is their sanctity? Whatever touches them shall become holy. [I.e.,] whatever is fit for [placement in] a service vessel, when it enters them [the vessels], it becomes intrinsically holy so that it becomes unfit [to be an offering] if it goes out [of its designated boundaries], if it stays [out] overnight, or if [it comes in contact with] a person who has immersed himself [from uncleanness] on that day, and it may not be redeemed to become ordinary [unsanctified] food. Something unfit for them [i.e., for the service vessels], however, they [the vessels] do not sanctify (Zev. 87a). This was taught as an explicit Mishnah concerning the altar [i.e., a Baraitha, Zev. 83b]: Since it is stated: “Whatever touches the altar will be holy” (Exod. 29:37), I understand it to mean whether it is fit or unfit. Therefore, [to clarify this,] the Torah states [that] lambs [are to be sacrificed upon the altar]. Because just as lambs are fit, so is anything else that is fit [sanctified if it comes in contact with the altar]. Every anointment of the Mishkan, the kohanim, and the kings is translated [by Onkelos] as an expression of greatness because there is no need to anoint them except in order to proclaim their greatness. So did the King [God] decree, that this [the anointment] is their initiation into greatness. Other anointments, however, such as anointed wafers, “and with the first oils they anoint themselves” (Amos 6:6), their Aramaic [translation] is the same as the Hebrew.

**31** **for your generations** From here our Rabbis deduced that it [the anointing oil made by Moses] will all remain in existence in the future. -[from Horioth 11b]

**This** Heb. זֶה. In gematria, this equals twelve logs. [7= ז, 5= ה, totaling 12.] -[from Horioth 11b]

**32** **It shall not be poured** Heb. איִיסָךְ. [This is spelled] with two “yud”s. It is an expression [in the form] of איִפְעַל, it shall not do, like, “and in order that it be good(יִיטַב)  for you” (Deut. 5:16).

**It shall not be poured upon human flesh** from this very oil.

**and according to its formula you shall not make anything like it** With the amount of its ingredients you shall not make another like it, but if one decreased or increased the ingredients according to the measure of a hin of oil, it is permitted. Also, the [oil] made according to the formula of this [oil]—the one who anoints himself [with it] is not liable, only the one who mixes it. -[from Ker. 5a]

**according to its formula** Heb. וּבְמַתְכֻּנְתּוֹ, a word meaning a number, like “the number of(מַתְכּֽנֶת)  bricks” (Exod. 5:8), and so, בְּמַתְכֻּנְתָּה, mentioned in reference to the incense (below, verse 37).

**33** **or puts any of it** **Of that [oil] of [i.e., made by] Moses. [However, anyone who anoints himself with oil that was made copying the original anointing oil is not liable.] - [from Ker. 5a]**

**on an alien** [I.e.,] which is not needed for the kehunah or the kingship.

**34** **balsam sap** Heb. נָטָף. This is balm (צֳרִי), but since it is only the sap that drips(נוֹטֵף)  from the balsam trees, it is calledנָטָף  (Ker. 6a), and in French, gomme, gum resin. The balm itself, however, is called triaca [in Old Provencal], theriac.

**onycha** Heb. וּשְׁחֵלֶת, a root of a spice, smooth and shiny as fingernails, and in the language of the Mishnah (Ker. 6a) it is called צִפּֽרֶן. This is what Onkelos renders as וְטוּפְרָא. [Bothצִפּֽרֶן  and  טוּפְרָאmean “fingernail.”]

**and galbanum** A spice with a vile odor, called galbane [in Old French], galbanum. The Scripture counted it among the ingredients of the incense [in order] to teach us that we should not look askance at including Jewish transgressors with us when we assemble for fasting or prayer. [The Torah instructs us] that they should be counted with us. -[from Ker. 6b]

**aromatics** Heb. סַמִּים. Other [aromatics]. -[from Ker. 6b]

**and pure frankincense** From here our Rabbis learned that eleven ingredients were told to Moses [when he was] at Sinai: the minimum of aromatics—two [since סַמִּים is written in the plural form]; balsam sap, onycha, and galbanum—three, equaling five; aromatics [written a second time]—to include again the number of these, equaling ten; and frankincense, totaling eleven. They are as follows: (1) balsam sap, (2) onycha, (3) galbanum, (4) frankincense, (5) myrrh, (6) cassia, (7) spikenard (שִׁבּֽלֶת נֵרְדְּ), and (8) saffron, totaling eight, because שִׁבּֽלֶת  and נֵרְדְּ  are one, for spikenardנֵרְדְּ  is like an ear [of grain] שִׁבּֽלֶת. [To continue:] (9) costus, (10) aromatic bark, and (11) cinnamon, thus totaling eleven. Borith carshina [mentioned further in the Baraitha, is not counted because it] does not go up in smoke, but they rub the onycha with it to whiten it so that it should be beautiful. -[from Ker. 6a]

**they shall be of equal weight** Heb. בַּד בְּבַד יִהְיֶה. These four [ingredients] mentioned here [explicitly] shall be equal, a weight for a weight. Like the weight of one, so shall be the weight of the other. So, we learned (Ker. 6a): The balsam, the onycha, the galbanum, and the frankincense the weight of each was seventy manehs. The wordבַּד  appears to me to mean a unit; each one [i.e., the weight] shall be this one like that one.

**35** **well blended** Heb. מְמֻלָח, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: מְעָרֵב, mixed. He should mix their [the spices’] powder thoroughly, one with the other. Accordingly, I say that [the following] are similar to this: “And the sailors (הַמַּלָּחִים)  were frightened” (Jonah 1:5); “your sailors (מַלָחַיִךְ)  and your mariners” (Ezek. 27:27). [Sailors are given this appellation] because they turn over the water with oars when they propel the ship, like a person who turns over beaten eggs with a spoon to blend them with water. And anything that a person wishes to blend thoroughly, he turns over with his finger or with a spoon.

**well blended, pure, holy** It shall be well blended; it shall be pure, and it shall be holy.

**36** **and you shall set some of it** This is the daily incense, which is on the inner altar, which is in the Tent of Meeting.

**where I will arrange meetings with you** All appointments to speak that I will set up for you, I will set up for that place.

**37** **according to its formula** According to the number of its ingredients.

**it shall be holy to you for the Lord That you shall not make it except for My Name.**

**38** **to smell it[s fragrance]** But you may make it according to its formula of your own [ingredients] in order to deliver it to the community. -[from Ker. 5a]

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 66:1-20**

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| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| 1. For the conductor, a song of praise; shout for joy to God, all the earth. | 1. For praise. A praise song. Shout for joy in the presence of the Lord, all inhabitants of the earth. |
| 2. Sing the glory of His name; make glorious His praise. | 2. Praise the glory of His name; set forth the glory of His praise. |
| 3. Say to God, "How awesome are Your **deeds**! Through the greatness of Your might, Your enemies will admit their lies to You. | 3. Say in the presence of God, “How fearful are Your **works**! For all the abundance of Your **works**, Your enemies will deny You.” |
| 4. All the earth will prostrate themselves to You and sing praises to You; they will sing praises to Your name forever." | 4. All the inhabitants of the earth will bow down before You, and they will praise You, they will praise Your name forever. |
| 5. Go and see the **deeds** of God, awesome in His **deeds** toward mankind. | 5. Come and see the **works** of God; fearful is the lord of destiny to the sons of men. |
| 6. He turned the sea into dry land; in the river they crossed by foot; there we rejoiced with Him. | 6. He turned the Red Sea to dry land; the sons of Israel crossed the river Jordan on their feet; He conveyed them to His holy mountain; there will we rejoice in His Word. |
| 7. With His might, He rules the world; His eyes oversee the nations; the rebellious ones will not exalt themselves, ever. | 7. He who rules over the world in the power of His strength, His eyes behold the Gentiles; let the disobedient not exalt themselves forever. |
| 8. O peoples, bless our God, and make the voice of His praise heard. | 8. Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of His praise heard. |
| 9. He, Who kept our souls alive and did not let our foot falter. | 9. Who has designated our souls for the life of the age to come and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. |
| 10. For **You tested us, O God; You refined us as though refining silver.** | 10. For you have tried us, O God, **You have refined us like a smith who refines silver.** *Another Targum:* For You have tried [us], for You have tested our fathers, O God; You exiled them among the kingdoms; You found them refined as one who purifies silver. |
| 11. You brought us into a trap; You placed a chain on our loins. | 11. You brought us into the net, You placed chains on our loins. *Another Targum:* You brought us into Egypt as into a net; You placed the rule of the Babylonians upon us, and we became like one on whose loins chains of trouble are placed. |
| 12. You caused man to ride at our head; we came in fire and water, and You took us out to satiety. | 12. You humbled us, You made our creditors ride over our heads; You judged us as if by fire and water, and You brought us out to a broad place. *Another Targum:* The Medes and Greeks rode over us, they passed over our heads; You brought us among the Romans, who judge us like the cruel Chaldeans, who cast our father Abraham into the fiery furnace, and the Egyptians, who cast our infants into the water; yet You brought us up to freedom. |
| 13. I will come to Your house with **burnt offerings**; I will pay You my vows, | 13. I will enter Your house with **burnt- offerings**, I will pay You my vows. *Another Targum:* Just as You have mercy on us and redeem us, then we will enter Your sanctuary with **burnt- offerings** and we will pay You our vows. |
| 14. Which my lips uttered, and my mouth spoke in my distress. | 14. Which opened my lips, and my mouth spoke, when I was in distress. |
| 15. Burnt offerings of fat animals I will offer up to You with the burning of rams; I will prepare cattle with he-goats forever. | 15. Fat burnt-offerings I will offer in Your presence, with the sweet smell of the sacrifice of rams; I will make [sacrifice of] bulls with he-goats forever. |
| 16. Come, hearken and I will tell all you who fear God what He did for my soul. | 16. Come hear, and I will tell all who fear God what He has done for my soul. |
| 17. My mouth called out to Him, and He was exalted under my tongue. | 17. I cried out to Him with my mouth, and His praise was on my tongue. |
| 18. If I saw iniquity in my heart, the Lord does not hear it. | 18. If I saw falsehood in my heart, would the Lord not hear? |
| 19. But God heard; He hearkened to the voice of my prayer. | 19. Truly God has heard, He listened to the sound of my prayer. |
| 20. Blessed be God, Who did not remove my prayer and His **kindness (Heb. Chessed)** from me. | 20. Blessed be God, who has not removed my prayer and His **favour** from me. |

## Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms) 66:1-20

**2 Sing the glory of His name** Sing in honor of His name. Or: Recite the glory of His name with music and song.

**3 How awesome** is each one of Your deeds!

**Through the greatness of Your might**When You show the world Your might through pestilence, sword, famine, or lightning Your enemies, the wicked, confess their lies and sins because of their great fear.

**5 awesome in His deeds**Feared by mankind, lest He find a transgression in them, for all their deeds are revealed to You.

**6 He turned the sea into dry land**The Sea of Reeds.

**there it rejoiced with it** I found: There was a thing with which the sea rejoiced, i.e., that the sea saw the Holy One, blessed be He.

**7 will not exalt themselves** Their hand will not be high.

**8 O peoples bless our God** for His wonders, that He kept our soul alive in exile, and you cannot annihilate us.

**10 You tested us**with distress in the exile.

**You refined us**to remove the dross from us when we repent before You, as they refine silver to remove its dross.

**11 You brought us into a trap** A narrow place, like in a prison.

**a chain** Heb. מועקה , an expression of locking up, and every [expression of] מֵעִיק and מֵצִיק is like it.

**12 You caused man to ride at our head** The kings of all the heathen nations.

**13 I shall come to Your house** when You build the Temple, we shall pay our vows that we vowed in exile.

**15 fat** Heb. מיחים , fat, an expression of מוֹחַ , marrow.

**16 all you who fear God**They are the proselytes who became converted.

**17 My mouth called out to Him**When we were in exile, we called out to Him, and we recited His exaltation with our tongue.

**and He was exalted**Heb. ורומם , like ונתרומם , and He was exalted. I found: With my mouth, I called out to Him. ורומם  is a noun. His exaltation is ready under my tongue to be let out of my mouth, as (Job 20:12): “though he hides it under his tongue.”

**18 If I saw iniquity, etc.** He did not deal with us according to our sins, but He made Himself as though He neither saw nor heard the iniquity that was in our hearts.

**19 But** indeed you should know.

**20 Who did not remove my prayer**from before Him, and He did not remove His kindness from me.

#### Meditation from the Psalms

**Psalms ‎‎66:1-20**

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

David composed this psalm in the twilight of his career, when G-d released him from the threat of the many hostile nations which surrounded him. Relieved of his concerns about the present, David was free to dream of the Messianic future.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The psalmist first turns to Israel’s glorious past, replete with wonders and miracles. The salvation of days gone by inspires the faith that such events are destined to be repeated on an even grander scale in the future, when G-d grants Israel its ultimate redemption.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Meiri[[7]](#footnote-7) also suggests that the original version of this psalm was com­posed at the time of the exodus from Egypt It foretells the splendor of the Temple, which was destined to be built by Solomon, Later, David adapted this work to the circumstances of his and future generations.

Indeed, Sforno[[8]](#footnote-8) observes that this psalm provides an eternal lesson in the art of supplication, David teaches the exiles to exert themselves in prayer to G-d and to emulate the example of their forefathers, who were granted redemption because of their unparalleled devotion in prayer.

In light of this, we can understand why the Vilna Gaon[[9]](#footnote-9) designates this as the ‘Song of the day’ for the sixth day of Passover.[[10]](#footnote-10) These verses serve as a most appropriate introduction to the climactic redemption at the sea, which occurred on the seventh of Passover.

In light of this, we can also understand why this prayer is appropriate for this day of the creation of the world, which He created only for man. Since the duty of man is to love and serve HaShem, it is appropriate that we have a Psalm which speaks of our prayer service and our redemption.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Psalms 66:5 contains an enigmatic phrase that must be explained:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 66:5*** *Come, and see the works of G-d; He shows awesome intrigue toward the children of men.*

The Rambam[[12]](#footnote-12) teaches us that “Perfect tzaddikim (‘righteous men’) cannot stand in the place of baalei teshuva”.[[13]](#footnote-13) For teshuva reveals the infinite G‑dly spark within our souls and connects us to G‑d at a level above even the most sublime levels of divine service.[[14]](#footnote-14) It goes without saying that one may not initiate a cycle of sin and teshuva[[15]](#footnote-15) in order to attain this intense bond. As our Sages teach,[[16]](#footnote-16) “He who says, ‘I will sin and I will repent’, is not granted the opportunity to repent”.

To borrow a term from our Sages,[[17]](#footnote-17) sin is “a descent for the sake of ascent”. By nature, a Jew is above sin. Thus, our Sages[[18]](#footnote-18) were able to state that certain sins “were not appropriate” to the Jewish people as a whole, or to particular individuals; they seemed to be out of character.

The punishment for the sins of the tzaddikim not only strengthens the power of the will to reform and the understanding of the way to reform, but ***the punishment itself repairs what was damaged in the sin, and the causes of the sin are likewise repaired.*** In this way the sin itself, when it is examined within the context of the circumstances that led to it, is not just a sin. In the process of retribution for a sin that was sinned, the sinner experiences a restoration of justice to its proper state.

Why, then, did these sinful acts take place? Because HaShem wanted to raise the people as a whole or the particular individuals involved to a higher level, and the only way this was possible was through their first undergoing the descent of sin.

In this context, Chassidic thought paraphrases Tehillim 66:5 and describes sin as “an awesome intrigue devised against man”. When a person’s Yetzer HaRaover­comes him and makes him sin, this is because it was prompted from Above to bring him to this act. Through this “awesome intrigue”, HaShem can bring man to the deeper and more intense bond that is established through teshuva.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Yet, our Psalm teaches that we must not harbor sin lest HaShem not hear us:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 66:18*** *If I had regarded iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not hear; 19 But verily G-d hath heard; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.*

This echos what Shaul said:

***Romans 6:1*** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

David speaks of burnt offerings, twice, in the midst of his praise of HaShem. This suggests that it is worth examining this area more closely.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 66:13*** *I will come into Thy house with burnt-offerings* (olah *-* ***עולה***), *I will perform unto Thee my vows,* ***14*** *Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in distress.* ***15*** *I will offer[[20]](#footnote-20) unto Thee burnt offerings of fatlings, with the sweet smoke of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah*

‘Burnt offering’ is the ordinary translation of the Hebrew *olah* (עולה). This term does not mean literally “burnt offering”, but “what is brought up” or presented to HaShem. The ‘olah is the only offering which may be accepted in the Temple from non-Jews, the drink-offering appertaining to it being in such cases furnished at the cost of the community.[[21]](#footnote-21) This offering was a voluntary sacrifice that had a high degree of sanctity and was regarded as the “standard” offering. The entire animal, except for its hide, was burned on the altar.[[22]](#footnote-22)

The עולה, burnt offering, atones for sinful thoughts, and for neglecting the performance of the positive commandments. The חטאת, sin-offering, atones for the commission of ***unintentional*** sins provided the sins are so severe that the transgressor would be liable to the penalty of karet,[[23]](#footnote-23) extirpation, had he committed them intentionally.[[24]](#footnote-24) G-d would prefer that we transgress no sins at all and hence render needless the entire institution of atonement sacrifices.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Rabbeinu Bechaye[[26]](#footnote-26) explains the difference between a sin offering and an olah offering. The sin offering comes from ***unintentional*** violation of prohibited actions. An olah, on the other hand, atones for improper thoughts. Improper thoughts, Rabbeinu Bechaye explains, is something that a person can never totally escape from. Unfortunately, they are very prevalent, and they are more prevalent at night than during the daytime. It is for this reason that the olah offerings are to burn the entire night. Nighttime is the time when people especially need atonement from improper thoughts. About this it is written:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 6:2*** *Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the law of the burnt-offering: It is the burnt-offering that stays on the flame, on the altar, all night until the morning, and the fire of the Altar should be kept aflame on it.*

Thus, the olah was on the altar atoning at the time when we were most likely to have sinful thoughts.

The first uses of the olah for burnt offering refer to the sacrifices of Noach “of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar”,[[27]](#footnote-27) and to the sacrifice of Yitzchak by Avraham: “offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains”.[[28]](#footnote-28) The third Sinai burnt offering is that of Yitro, Moshe’ father in law.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Why is anolah*,* a burnt offering, brought? Rava[[30]](#footnote-30) explains that it is a gift to G-d[[31]](#footnote-31) and does not come to effect atonement. Rava’s teaching stands in apparent contradiction to the Gemara, which taught that the olah sacrifice served to atone for mitzvot aseh, positive commandments, that were not performed. There is no punishment in the Torah for neglecting to perform a positive commandment, so the Gemara claimed that this sacrifice served as an act of atonement for it.

In his commentary on the Torah[[32]](#footnote-32) the Ramban[[33]](#footnote-33) explains that when someone intentionally neglects to fulfill a positive commandment, even though there is no punishment, nevertheless there is a break in the relationship between the sinner and G-d. The olah, brought as a gift to G-d, serves to repair the relationship, and is therefore seen as offering atonement. From Rashi it appears that he believes that simple teshuva, repentance, suffices to fully erase the sin of neglecting to perform a mitzvot aseh. The intention of the Gemara is to say that the olah sacrifice would allow such a person to be welcomed before G-d when he desires to approach Him.[[34]](#footnote-34)

The Torah often juxtaposes the *olah* (burnt offering) and the *chatat* (sin offering). The Torah always places the sin offering first, followed by the burnt offering, in fact, the Halacha[[35]](#footnote-35) is that anytime a person needs to bring both a sin and an olah offering, the person brings the sin offering first, followed by the olah offering. This is a procedural rule in offering “mixed sacrifices”. Rashi explains the reason for the rule in Parshat Vayikra: A sin offering offers atonement for a sin; an olah re-establishes one’s relationship with HaShem. Anytime a person has offended someone, protocol is to send in an intermediary first to make an apology, after the apology, it is appropriate to bring in a present to restore the relationship. One starts with the appeasement, not with the present, as we can see in the following pesukim:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 5:7-10*** *“‘If he cannot afford a lamb, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to HaShem as a penalty for his sin--one for a* ***sin offering*** *and the other for a* ***burnt offering****. He is to bring them to the priest, who shall* ***first offer the one for the sin offering****. He is to wring its head from its neck, not severing it completely, And is to sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering against the side of the altar; the rest of the blood must be drained out at the base of the altar. It is a sin offering. The priest shall then offer the other as a burnt offering in the prescribed way and make atonement for him for the sin he has committed, and he will be forgiven.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 9:1-16*** *On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. He said to Aaron, “Take a bull calf for your* ***sin offering*** *and a ram for your* ***burnt offering****, both without defect, and present them before HaShem. Then say to the Israelites: ‘Take a male goat for a sin offering, a calf and a lamb--both a year old and without defect--for a burnt offering, And an ox and a ram for a fellowship offering to sacrifice before HaShem, together with a grain offering mixed with oil. For today HaShem will appear to you.’” They took the things Moses commanded to the front of the Tent of Meeting, and the entire assembly came near and stood before HaShem. Then Moses said, “This is what HaShem has commanded you to do, so that the glory of HaShem may appear to you.” Moses said to Aaron, “Come to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and the people; sacrifice the offering that is for the people and make atonement for them, as HaShem has commanded.” So, Aaron came to the altar and slaughtered the calf as a sin offering for himself. His sons brought the blood to him, and he dipped his finger into the blood and put it on the horns of the altar; the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar. On the altar he burned the fat, the kidneys, and the covering of the liver from the sin offering, as HaShem commanded Moses; The flesh and the hide he burned up outside the camp. Then he slaughtered the burnt offering. His sons handed him the blood, and he sprinkled it against the altar on all sides. They handed him the burnt offering piece by piece, including the head, and he burned them on the altar. He washed the inner parts and the legs and burned them on top of the burnt offering on the altar. Aaron then brought the offering that was for the people. He took the goat for the people’s* ***sin offering*** *and slaughtered it and offered it for a sin offering as he did with the first one. He brought the* ***burnt offering*** *and offered it in the prescribed way.*

Notice that the order is always:

1. Sin offering

2. Burnt offering

If anyone has had the experience of somehow doing something wrong to their wives, such that they owe them an apology, it should be obvious that proper etiquette requires something more than just sending flowers. First a husband must offer his profuse apology, atoning for his past mistake. Only then is it appropriate to give a present. Presents themselves should not be expected to work in lieu of an apology. **Therefore, the “chatat”, sin offering *always* precedes the “olah”, burnt offering.**

This idea is really synopsized in Tehillim [Psalms] by the pasuk:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 34:15*** *Depart from evil and do good.*

The Gemara, in Zevachim 90a, makes an interesting observation about the order of the olah followed by the chatat in the following pasuk:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 12:6*** *And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: 7 Who shall offer it before HaShem, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. 8 And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.*

Why, the Gemara asks, does the Torah here imprecisely specify “and she shall take two turtledoves or two young doves, one for an olah-offering and one for a sin-offering” (contrary to the normal order)? The Talmud answers, somewhat mysteriously, “the olah offering precedes the sin-offering *only in the Torah reading*, not in terms of the sequence in which they are actually offered”.

Next, we find something real interesting when HaShem introduces the olah, HaShem said to Moshe:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 6:2*** *“****Tzav*** *et Aharon v’et bah’nahv lay’mor: Zoht toh’raht ha’olah,”* ***Command*** *Aaron and his sons saying, “This is the Law of the Olah, the burnt offering”.*

This is the first instance where the word *“Tzav*”, *command*, is used with respect to a sacrifice. The other offerings were introduced with the words:

Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:2 *“v’ah’mar’tah”,* **say**

Or

Vayikra (Leviticus) 4:2 “*da’bayer”,* **speak**.

Apparently, when the rules of the offerings are addressed directly to the people who bring these offerings the Torah uses a softer language. Now, however, when the Torah speaks directly to Aaron and his sons to teach them additional laws that have bearing on the sacrificial service, the Torah uses the more forceful imperative, “command.”

Rashi[[36]](#footnote-36) explains that the word *Tzav*, command, implies that the priests, must be urged to be especially diligent when performing the *Olah* service. Rashi also cites Rabbi Shimon’s statement in the Midrash, who argues that the priests must show particular commitment in this instance because their involvement with the *Olah* offering may result in a considerable financial loss to them.

**A Matter of Perspective[[37]](#footnote-37)**

An olah, which atones for sinful thoughts, is completely burned on the Altar. On the other hand, a chatat, which atones for a sin that a person actually committed, is partially eaten by the priests.[[38]](#footnote-38) This seems counterintuitive. Since doing a sin is worse than only thinking about it, why is the chatat more lenient in this regard than the olah? Shouldn’t their treatment be reversed, with the sacrifice brought by somebody requiring atonement for an actual transgression completely offered to HaShem and forbidden for human consumption, while the offering of somebody who merely thought about sinning is split between the priests and the Altar?

HaRav Shmaryahu Arieli answers based on the teaching of the Gemara:[[39]](#footnote-39) Paradoxical as it may seem, sinful thoughts are considered even worse than actual sins. However, this begs the question: Why, in fact, is this the case?

HaRav Arieli answers this question based on the Gemara’s explanation for another seemingly counterintuitive law. The Torah requires a thief who steals an object secretly to repay double the item’s value, whereas an armed robber who brazenly confronts his victim is only obligated to pay the value of the item that he stole. Why is the Torah harsher with the cunning thief who does not interact with his target than with the robber who traumatizes his victim?

The Gemara[[40]](#footnote-40) explains that this is because the undetected thief demonstrates greater fear of other humans, whom he does not want to see him stealing, than he does of HaShem, whose presence during his crime doesn’t faze him. On the other hand, the bold and unabashed robber shows that he is equally unafraid of HaShem and of people. Because the thief who steals secretly shows such lack of concern for HaShem, he is punished more harshly.

Similarly, HaRav Arieli suggests that a person who sins only in the confines of his mind is comparable to the cunning thief, as he demonstrates that he is afraid for other people to see him sinning, but it doesn’t concern him that HaShem is aware of the sins in his mind, while a person who commits a sin is analogous to the robber who openly steals from his victims, as he is equally unafraid of HaShem and of other people who witness his sin. Therefore, just as the cunning thief receives a greater punishment for fearing other people more than HaShem, so, too, must the offering which atones for sinful thoughts be completely burned, in contrast to the sin-offering, which may be partially eaten by the priests.

David’s use of olah, multiple times in our psalm suggest that it was important. Couple that with his use of ‘offer’ as a verbal tally, in the same context as the olah, suggests that this was what caught his attention and formed the basis of his commentary.

## Ashlamatah: Malachi 1:11 – 2:7

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel in the hand of Malachi. | 1. ¶ The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel, by Malachi. |
| 2. I loved you, said the Lord, and you said, "How have You loved us?" Was not Esau a brother to Jacob? says the Lord. And I loved Jacob. | 2. "I have loved you, says the LORD. And if you say, 'How have you loved us?' - was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord. Yet I loved Jacob, |
| 3. And I hated Esau, and I made his mountains desolate and his heritage into [a habitat for] the jackals of the desert. | 3. and I abhorred Esau and turned his mountains into a desolation and his inheritance into a waste desert. |
| 4. Should Edom say, "We were poor, but we will return and build the ruins"? So said the Lord of Hosts: They shall build, but I will demolish; and they shall be called the border of wickedness and the people whom the Lord has damned forever. | 4. If the Edomites say, 'We were impoverished/ now we have become rich and we shall rebuild the ruined places', thus says the LORD of hosts, They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called the land whose people are wicked and the people upon whom the LORD brought a curse forever. |
| 5. And your eyes shall see, and you shall say, "The Lord is great beyond the border of Israel." | 5. And your eyes will behold, and you will say, 'Great is the glory of the LORD who has extended the border of Israel.' |
| 6. A son honors a father, and a slave his master. Now if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My fear? says the Lord of Hosts to you, the priests, who despise My name. But you said, "How have we despised Your Name?" | 6. Behold, it is said concerning a son that he should honour (his) father, and a servant should fear his master; but if I am like a father, where is it that you are honouring Me? And if I am like a master, where is it that you are fearing Me? says the LORD of hosts to you, o priests, who despise My name. And if you say, 'How have we despised your name?' |
| 7. You offer on My altar defiled food, yet you say, "How have we defiled You?" By your saying, "God's table is contemptible." | 7. You offer an abominable offering upon My altar. And if you say, 'How is it abominable? - in that you say, 'The LORD's table is despicable.' |
| 8. When you offer a blind [animal] for a sacrifice, is there nothing wrong? And when you offer a lame or a sick one, is there nothing wrong? Were you to offer it to your governor, would he accept you or would he favor you? says the Lord of Hosts. | 8. And when you offer what is blind in sacrifice is it not wrong? And when you offer what is lame and sickly is it not wrong? Offer it now to your governor who is over you; will he be pleased with you or will he show you favour? says the LORD of hosts. |
| 9. And now, will you pray before the Lord that He be gracious to us? This has come from your hand. Will He favor any of you? says the Lord of Hosts. | 9. And now pray, therefore, before the LORD God that He may hear our prayer. This has been from your hand; will you be shown favour? says the LORD of hosts. |
| 10. O that there were even one among you that would close the doors [of the Temple] and that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain! I have no desire in you, says the Lord of Hosts. Neither will I accept an offering from your hand. | 10. Moreover, who is here among you that will close the doors of My Sanctuary that you may not offer an abominable offering upon My altar? I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, nor will I accept graciously an offering from your hand. |
| 11. For, from the rising of the sun until its setting, My Name is great among the nations, **and everywhere offerings are burnt and offered up to My Name; yea, a pure oblation,** for My Name is great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts. | 11. For from the rising of the sun even to its setting My name is great among the nations, **and on every occasion when you fulfil my will I hear your prayer and My great name is hallowed because of you and your prayer is like a pure offering before Me**; for My name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. |
| 12. But you are profaning it by your saying, "The Lord's table is defiled"; and its expression is "Its food is contemptible." | 12. But you are profaning it in that you say, 'The LORD's table is despicable and the gifts from it are despicable.' |
| 13. And you say, "Here is a weary one," and you cause it pain, says the Lord of Hosts. And you brought that which was taken by violence, and the lame and the sick. And you bring an offering-will I accept it from your hand? says the Lord.    **{S}** | 13. And you say, 'Behold what we have brought from our property you have strangled it,’ says the LORD of hosts, and you bring what is taken by violence, or is lame, or sickly, and you bring it as an offering; will I receive it with pleasure from your hand? says the LORD.    **{S}** |
| 14. And cursed is he who deals craftily; although there is a ram in his flock, he vows and sacrifices a blemished one. For I am a great King, says the Lord of Hosts, and My Name is feared among the nations. | 14. And cursed be the person who acts deceitfully when there is a male in his flock and he is bound to perform a vow and he sacrifices what is blemished before the LORD; for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and My name is mighty among the nations." |
|  |  |
| 1. And now, to you is this commandment, O priests. | 1. "And now this commandment is for you, o priests. |
| 2. If you do not heed, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My Name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have [already] cursed it, for you do not take it to heart. | 2. If you do not hearken, and if you do not lay My fear upon (your) heart so as to give honour to My name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse among you and I will curse your blessings; and I will indeed curse them, for you are not laying My fear upon (your) heart. |
| 3. Behold! I rebuke the seed because of you, and I will scatter dung upon your face-the dung of your festive sacrifices, and it shall take you to itself. | 3. Behold, I am about to rebuke your increase from the land, and I will reveal the shame of your sins upon your faces, and I will put an end to the glory of your festivals, and your share will be withheld from it. |
| 4. And you shall know that I have sent you this commandment, that My covenant be with Levi, says the Lord of Hosts. | 4. And you will know that I have sent this commandment to you that My covenant which was with Levi may hold, says the LORD of hosts. |
| 5. My covenant was with him, life, and peace, and I gave them to him [with] fear; and he feared Me, and because of My Name, he was over-awed. | 5. My covenant was with him (for) life and peace, and I gave him the perfect teaching of My Law and he feared/from before Me and feared from before My name. |
| 6. **True teaching was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. In peace and equity, he went with Me, and he brought back many from iniquity.** | 6. **True instruction was in his mouth and deceit was not found on his lips; in peace and in uprightness did he walk before Me, and he turned many back from sin.** |
| 7. **For a priest's lips shall guard knowledge, and teaching should be sought from his mouth, for he is a messenger of the Lord of Hosts.** | 7. **For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and men seek instruction from his mouth; for he serves before the LORD of hosts.** |
| 8. But you have turned aside from the way. You caused many to stumble in the Torah. You corrupted the covenant of the Levites, said the Lord of Hosts. | 8. But you have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by (your) instruction; you have corrupted the covenant, which was with Levi, says the LORD of hosts. |
| 9. And now I, too, have made you contemptible and low to the entire people according to how you do not keep My ways and [how] you show favouritism in the Torah.   **{P}** | 9. And moreover, I have made you despised and enfeebled before all the people, inasmuch as you do not follow paths that are good before Me but show partiality in (your) instruction.  **{P}** |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Malachi 1:11 – 2:7**

**Chapter 1**

**1** **The burden of the word of the Lord** Porport in Old French, burden. A word delivered to Malachi to bear to the children of Israel.

**in the hand of Malachi** It was already delivered into his hand for many days. **From here, our Sages expounded in a baraitha of Mechilta that all the prophets stood on Mount Sinai and there the prophecies were delivered to them, and so [Isaiah (48:16)] says: “From the time it was, there was I, and now, the Lord God has sent me, [and His spirit].”**

**2** **And I loved Jacob** And I gave him (Jer. 3:19) “a desirable land, an inheritance of the desire of hosts of nations”; a land that all the hosts of nations desire.

**3** **And I hated Esau** to push him off to a land because of Jacob, his brother. Now it is customary in the world that, if one has two sons, he selects a beautiful portion for the firstborn.

**and I made his mountains desolate** They do not compare to the mountains of Israel.

**for the jackals of the desert** A den of jackals.

**4** **Should Edom say, “We were poor”** And if Edom says, “At first we were poor, but from now on we will be rich from the spoils of Jerusalem."

**but we will return and build the ruins** Our ruins, so said the Lord, etc.

**5** **“The Lord is great beyond the border of Israel.”** He will show His greatness over our border, to make known that we are His people. And Jonathan rendered: **May the glory of the Lord be magnified, and He has widened the border of Israel.**

**6** **A son**is required to honor his father, and so a slave his master and you are called sons and slaves. Now, if I am your father, where is My honor?

**says the Lord of Hosts to you** You, the priests who despise My Name.

**But you said, “How have we despised”** I knew that you would say, “How have we despised?” This is the contempt [as follows:]

**7** **You offer on My altar, etc., yet you say** And if you say.

**“How have we defiled You?”** How have we defiled for You the bread of Your altar? I reply to you that, in this manner you have defiled Me.

**By your saying, “God’s table is contemptible.”** They would look with contempt on sharing equally the meal offerings and the hallowed foods, and they would say, "Since we may not share a meal offering for a meal offering, or a sacrifice for a sacrifice, it is too much bother and toil to divide each meal offering for the olive-sized piece or the bean-sized piece that is apportioned to each one."

**8** **is there nothing wrong?** Is this thing not bad?

**9** **And now, will you pray before the Lord?** And now, you priests, who commit this evil, how does it enter your mind that you can be the messengers of Israel, to supplicate God to have compassion on them? Lo, this evil has come from your hand.

**Will He favor any of you** to hearken to a prayer from your mouth, and to favor those who sent you?

**10** **O that there were even one among you that would close the doors** If only a good man would arise among you who would close the doors of My sanctuary so as not to allow this abominable sacrifice there.

**and that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain** with fire offerings with which I am not placated, for I have no desire in you. **And our Sages expounded in Torath Kohanim (7:154): If a person says to his friend, “Close this door for me,” he does not demand compensation for it; [or if he says,] “Light this candle for me,” he does not request compensation for it. But you - who is there among you who closed My doors, gratis? Neither did you kindle fire on My altar gratis. Surely, things that are customarily done for compensation you did not do gratis. Therefore, I have no desire in you.**

**11** **My Name is great among the nations** Our Sages stated (Men. 110a): For they call Him the God of the gods. Even one who has an idol knows that He is the God Who is over all of them - and everywhere they donate in My Name. Our Sages, however, explained: **These are the Torah scholars who are engaged in the laws of the Temple service everywhere, and likewise, every prayer of Israel that they pray anywhere is to Me as a pure oblation**. And so did Jonathan paraphrase: **And every time that you do My will, I accept your prayer, and My great Name is sanctified through you, and your prayer is like a pure offering before Me.** This is the explanation of the verse: Now why do you profane My Name? Is it not great among the nations? **As for Me, My love and My affection are upon you wherever you pray before Me, and even in exile, [offerings are] burnt and offered up to My Name.**

**yea, a pure oblation** it is to Me, for through you My Name is feared among the nations. Yet you profane Me and My Name.

**12** **and its expression is “Its food is contemptible.”** The expression of the altar that is fluent on your lips is always, “Its food is contemptible"; that [is all] you say about it. You have already spread this slander, and you have strongly attached this expression to My altar.

**its food** its food.

**13** **And you say, “Here is a weary one”** An emaciated animal, and we are poor and cannot afford the choicest for [our] vows. So did Jonathan render: This is what we have brought from our toil.

**and you cause it pain** This is one of the eighteen words [in all of Scripture known as] the emendations of the scribes. וְהִפַּחְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ should have been written: אוֹתִי, and you cause Me pain. Scripture, however, euphemized, writing אוֹתוֹ it.

**and you cause pain** and you cause pain, an expression of despair (Job 11:20).

**it** My table.

**14** **he who deals craftily** Plots deceitfully, with guile, before Me, saying, “I have none better than this. ”

**a ram** a ram fit for a burnt offering; and he vows and sacrifices a blemished one - as in (Lev. 22:25), "their corruption is in them; a blemish is in them."

**Chapter 2**

**1** **to you, etc., O priests** I charge you with this commandment, that you shall not sacrifice these on My altar.

**2** **and I will curse** And I will curse your blessings; how I should bless the grain, the wine, and the oil for you.

**Indeed I have [already] cursed it** Indeed, it is unnecessary to have the matter depend on the condition upon which I made it depend: if they do not obey. For I know that you will not obey. Therefore, I have already cursed it - from now.

**3** **and I will scatter dung** of the animals of your festive sacrifices; that is to say, you will not receive reward from Me, but [you will receive a curse] for harm and shame. And I will rebuke the seed of the field because of you.

**and it shall take you to itself** The dung of your sacrificial animals will take you to itself to [make you] cheap and despised, as it is.

**4** **that My covenant be with Levi** for I wish that you will exist with Me with the covenant that I formed for the tribe of Levi.

**5** **life and peace** As it was said to Phinehas (Num. 25:12): “My covenant of peace”; and it was promised to him and to his seed after him, thus indicating that his seed will be alive.

**and I gave them to him** that he accept them with fear, and so he did, and he feared Me.

**he was over-awed** an expression of חִתַּת, fear; he was afraid.

**6** **In peace and equity he went with Me** Aaron, Eleazar, and Phinehas and so in the episode of the calf, they brought back all their tribe from iniquity, as it is said (Ex. 32:26), “all the children of Levi gathered to him.”

**7** **For a priest’s lips** It is incumbent upon them to guard knowledge. Why? Because...

**teaching should be sought from his mouth** This matter has already (Deut. 33:10) been delivered to them. “They shall teach Your judgments to Jacob.”

**for he is a messenger** the agent of the Holy One, blessed be He; like the ministering angels, to serve Him and to enter into His compartment. [I.e., into the place where God’s presence is manifest.]

**Pirqe Abot**

**(Chapters of the Fathers)**

**Mishna 1:1**

**MISHNA 1.**

**Moses received the Law on Sinai and delivered it to Joshua; Joshua in turn handed it down to the Elders (not to the seventy Elders of Moses' time but to the later Elders who have ruled Israel, and each of them delivered it to his successor); from the Elders it descended to the prophets (beginning with Eli and Samuel), and each of them delivered it to his successors until it reached the men of the Great Assembly. The last, named originated three maxims: "Be not hasty in judgment; Bring up many disciples; and, Erect safe guards for the Law."**

**Tosephta--Abot of R. Nathan.**

Moses was sanctified in the cloud, and received the Torah from Sinai, as it is written [Ex. xxiv. 16]: "And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai," which means on Moses (for what purpose?), to purify him; this occurred after the ten commandments had been given. So says R. Jose the Galilean; R. Aqiba, however, says: It is written [ibid.]: "And the cloud covered it six days." This refers to the mountain, before the ten commandments had been given, and this is what is written further on [ibid.]: "And he called unto Moses the seventh day out of the cloud" (for what purpose?--only) to confer honor upon him.

Said R. Nathan: Why did Moses stay the entire six days without communication from the Shekhina? To cleanse his body of all the food and drink it contained, that he might be like angels at the time of his consecration.

Said R. Mathia b. Heresh to him: Rabbi, all this stated above was done only to overawe him, that he might receive the words of the Torah with awe, terror, fear and trembling, as it is written [Ps. ii. "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling."

It happened that R. Josiah and R. Mathia b. Heresh were both sitting and studying the Law. R. Josiah then departed to attend to worldly affairs. Said R. Mathia to him: "Rabbi, what dost thou gain by forsaking the words of the living God, and devoting thyself to worldly affairs? Even though thou art my master, and I thy disciple, yet I dare say that it is not right to do so." (Lest one say that R. Josiah did so from jealousy,) it was said: While sitting and studying the Torah they were jealous of each other, but when they parted they were like friends from youth.

Through Moses the Torah was given on Sinai, as it is written [Deut. v. 19]: "And he wrote them on two tables of stone, and he gave them unto me." And also [Lev. xxvi. 46]: "These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai, by the hand of Moses." The Law which the Holy One, blessed be He, has given to Israel, was given only in the hand of Moses, as it is written [Ex. xxxi. 17]: "Between me and the children of Israel." So Moses (because of his purification and sanctification) was privileged to be the representative of Israel before the Lord.

Moses offered the ram of consecration and prepared the oil of anointment, and anointed therewith Aaron and his sons during all the seven days of consecration. With the same oil high-priests and kings were afterward anointed, and Elazar burned the (first) red-cow, with the ashes of which the unclean were purified in later generations. Said R. Eliezer: "The oil of anointment was of such importance that it remained even for the later generations, for Aaron and his sons were consecrated with the oil of anointment, as it is written [Ex. xxx. 30]: 'And Aaron and his sons shalt thou anoint, and consecrate them to be priests.'" (Hence we see that although Aaron was a high-priest, his sons, nevertheless, stood in need of anointment.)

Joshua received it (the Law) from Moses, as it is written [Numb. xxvii. 20]: "And thou shalt put some of thy greatness upon him, in order that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient." The elders (who lived after Moses) received it from Joshua, as it is written [Judges ii. 7]: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that lived many days after Joshua, who had seen all the great deeds of the Lord, which he had done for Israel." The judges received it from the elders, as it is written [Ruth, i. 1]: "And it came to pass in the days when the judges judged." 1 The prophets received it from the judges (beginning with Samuel the prophet, who was also a judge), as it is written [Jerem. vii. 25]: "And I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, sending them daily in the morning early." Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi received it from the prophets. The men of the Great Assembly received it from. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and they said the following three things mentioned in the Mishna:

"Be deliberate in judgement." How so? It means a man shall be slow in his judgment, for he who is slow is deliberate, as it is written [Prov. xxv. 1]: "Also these are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah the king of Judah have collected." They have not collected them,, but they were deliberating upon them before (making them public). Abba Saul, however, said: "Not only were they deliberating over them, but they also explained them."

Formerly it was said: The books of Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes were hidden, because they are only parables, and do not belong to the Hagiographa; the men of the Great Assembly, however, came and explained them, as it is written [Prov. vii. 7-20]: "And I beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a lad void of sense, etc. and, behold, a woman came to meet him with the attire of a harlot and obdurate of heart; she is noisy and ungovernable; in her house her feet never rest; at one time she is in the street, at another in the open places, and near every corner doth she lurk, and she caught hold of him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face she said to him, 'I had bound myself to bring peace-offerings; this day have I paid my vows; therefore I am come forth to meet thee, to seek thy presence diligently, and I have found thee. With tapestry coverings have I decked my bed, with embroidered coverlids of the fine linen of Egypt. I have sprinkled my couch with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us indulge in love until the morning: let us delight ourselves with dalliances. For the man is not in his house, he is gone on a journey a great way off; the bag of money hath he taken with him; by the day of the new-moon festival only will he come home.'" And it is written also in Song of Songs [vii. 12, 13]: "Come, my friend, let us go into the field; let us spend the night in the villages; let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the wine have blossomed, whether the young grape have opened (to the view), whether the pomegranate have budded: there will I give my caresses unto thee." And it is written again in Ecclesiastes [xi. 9]: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy childhood; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youthful vigor, and walk firmly in the ways of thy heart, and in (the direction which) thy eyes see; but know thou, that concerning all these things God will bring thee into judgment." And again in Song of Songs [vii. 10]: "I am my friend's, and toward me is his desire." So we see that the last-mentioned passage of the Song of Songs explains all that was mentioned above; under the term "my friend's" the Lord is understood. Hence (it is sure) that they were not only deliberating, but also explaining them.

According to others the statement "Be deliberate in judgment means to teach that one shall be careful with his words, and also not to have an irascible manner against those who have received his words, for one who is easily provoked by those who have received his words often forgets his (original) words; for so we find with Moses, our master, who had forgotten his (original) words.

And where do we find that Moses was irascible with his hearers? It is written [Numb. xxxi. 14]: "And Moses was wroth. . . . Have you allowed all the females to live?" And it is written [ibid., ibid. 16]: "Behold . . . through the counsel of Bil'am." How so? Infer from this that this was the advice of Bil'am given to Balak: "These people, your enemies, are hungry for food and are thirsty for drink, as they have nothing but manna. Go and put up tents for them, place in them food and drink, and seat in them beautiful women, daughters of nobles, so that the people may turn to Baal Peor." (This will be given in Sanhedrin in detail.)

Now from this we may draw an a fortiori conclusion. If Moses our master, the wisest of the wise and the father of the prophets, at the time he became angry at his listeners forgot his original words, so much the more would we commoners. From this we should learn how necessary it is to be careful and not irascible.

Ben Azai says: Be careful in thy words, that thy hearers shall not err through them.

"And erect safeguards for the Law." That means that one shall make a safeguard to his words as the Holy One, blessed be He, has done. Adam the First made one to his; the Torah made one to its words; Moses and job likewise made safeguards to their words, and so also the Prophets and Hagiographers have all made safeguards to their words.

The safeguard that the Holy One, blessed be He, made is this [Deut. xxix. 23]: "Even all the nations will say, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?" Infer from this that it was known beforehand to Him, by whose one word the universe was created, that the future generations will ask this; therefore he said to Moses: Write the answer for the future generations [ibid., ibid. 24, 25]: "Then shall men say, because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord, etc., and they went and served other gods and bowed down to them--gods which they knew not, and which he had not assigned unto them."

We see, then, that the Holy One, blessed be He, made these answers, to prevent His people from incurring His wrath by their questions, and that they might live in peace.

Adam the First's safeguard to his words was thus [Gen. ii. 16, 17]: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for on the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

We see, then, that Adam did not want to give Eve the exact words he received, but he added [ibid. iii. 3]: "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," in order that they should take care even not to touch the tree. At that time the wicked serpent said to himself: "As it is impossible for me to make Adam stumble (for he himself received the words from the Lord), I will make Eve stumble." He sat by her and had a long conversation with her. He said to her: "As thou sayest that the Holy One, blessed be He, has forbidden thee to touch it, see that I am touching it and will not die, and the same will be with thee." And so he did: he arose and shook the tree with his hands and feet till the fruit fell down. [According to others the serpent did not actually touch the tree at all, because as soon as the tree saw the serpent it stopped him and said: "Thou wicked one, do not touch me," as it is written [Ps. xxxvi. 12]: "Let not come against me the foot of pride, and let not the hand of the wicked chase me off." Another explanation of the above passage is, that it has referred to Titus, who beckoned with his hand, and struck the altar, saying: "λυχος! λυχος! (wolf!) thou art a king, and I am a king, come and engage with me in battle. How many oxen were slaughtered upon thee; how many heads of birds were pinched off on thee; how many measures of wine were poured upon thee; how much incense of spices was burned upon thee, thou art the one who destroys the whole world," as it is written [Is. xxix. 1]: "Woe to Ariël, to Ariël, the town where David dwelt! Add ye year to year; let the festivals come round in order."]

The serpent said again to her (Eve): "If thou sayest that the Holy One, blessed be He, forbade to eat it, see I eat of it, and do not die, and thou mayest do the same and thou wilt not die." So Eve said to herself, the injunctions of my master are unfounded. [(There is a tradition that) at first Eve called Adam nothing but master.] She then herself ate of the fruit and gave it to Adam, and he too ate, as it is written [Gen. iii. 6]: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that, it was pleasant to the eyes," etc.

With ten curses was Eve cursed at that time, as it is written [ibid., ibid. 16]: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and (the suffering of) thy conception; in pain shalt thou bring forth (children), and for thy husband shall be thy desire, but he shall rule over thee." "I will greatly multiply"--those are the two afflictions of blood that a woman has to suffer: that of her menstruation and that primæ noctis. "And thy suffering" means the rearing of children; "and thy conception" means the pain of pregnancy. "In pain shalt thou bring forth children" is to be taken in its literal sense. "And for thy husband shall be thy desire"; infer from this that the woman is longing for her husband during his absence on a journey. She is wrapped like a mourner, separated from all men as if she were in prison and as if she were excommunicated from all mankind. And who caused all this? The words that Adam added: "Ye shall not touch it." From this they deduced the maxims that if one makes a safeguard to his words (without stating that it is such) he cannot stand by it. Consequently they said that one must not add to what he has heard. Said R. Jose (this is what people say): "It is better to have a wall of ten spans which is solid, than one of a hundred ells which is tottering."

What were the thoughts of the wicked serpent at that time? "I will slay Adam and marry his wife, and I will be king of the whole world, I will walk erect, and will banquet on the best of the land." Then the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: "Thou hast thought to slay Adam and marry his wife, therefore I will put enmity (between thee and the woman); thou hast thought to be king of the world, therefore be thou cursed among all the cattle; thou hast thought to walk erect, therefore upon thy belly shalt thou go; thou hast thought to banquet on the best of the land, therefore dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

R. Simeon b. Menassia says: "Woe that a great servant was lost to the world, for if the serpent had not been accursed, every one would have had two serpents in his house. He would send one to the West, and the other to the East, and they would bring him diamonds, precious stones and pearls, and all the valuable things of the world, and no creature could stand against them, and furthermore they could be used instead of a camel, ass, and mule in the field, garden," etc.

R. Jehudah b. Bathyra says: "Adam was sitting in the Garden of Eden and the angels served him with roasted meat and chilled wine." When the serpent saw this and observed this honor, he became jealous.

How was Adam created? The first hour his dust was gathered, the second the form was created, the third he became a body, the fourth his members were joined, the fifth the openings were developed, the sixth the soul was put unto him, the seventh he rose to his feet, the eighth Eve was mated to him, the ninth he was brought into the Garden of Eden, the tenth the command was given to him, the eleventh he sinned, the twelfth he was Chasen out and went away; this is what is written [Ps. xlix. 21]: "Ve Adam bikor bal yolin." 1 (Adam, "Bal Yolin"--he shall not stay over night.) [We have learned in Tract Rosh Hashana, p. 55: On the first day which psalm did they say? "Unto the Lord belongeth the earth with what filleth it" [Ps. xxi. 17]; this was because He created and is still continuing to create, and He is judging the world. On the second day they said: "Great is the Lord and highly praised, in the city of our God" [ibid. xlviii. 2]; it is because He divided all His creatures and became the one ruler of the universe. On the third they said: "God standeth in the congregation of God, in the midst of judges doth He judge" [ibid. lxxxii. 1]; it is because He then created the sea, the land, and the earth was rolled to its right place, and room was made for His congregation. On the fourth day they said: "O God of vengeance, Lord! O God of vengeance, shine forth" [Ps. xciv. 1]; because then He created the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets which give light to the world, and the Lord will punish those who worship them. On the fifth they said: "Sing aloud unto God our strength; shout joyfully unto the God of Jacob" [Ps. lxxxi. 2]; because He then created the birds, the fishes, and the great sea monsters, who (the birds) fill the world with song. On the sixth they said: "The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with excellency; the Lord is clothed, He had girded Himself with strength: (therefore) also the world is firmly established, that it cannot be moved." Because then He finished all His work He became exalted and placed Himself on the loftiest point of the world. On the seventh they said: "A psalm or song for the Sabbath day" [ibid. xcii. 1]. A day of entire rest, when there is no eating nor no drinking and no traffick, but the upright sit with their crowns on their heads and are nourished from the glory of the Shekhina, as it is written [Ex. xxiv. 11]: "And they saw (the glory of) God, and did eat and drink," just like the angels.]

Why was Adam created on the last hour of the sixth day? In order that he might immediately partake of the sabbatical meal.

R. Simeon b. Elazar said: Adam can be likened to an Israelite who married a proselyte woman, and he constantly sought to impress upon her mind the following regulations: "My daughter, eat not bread when thy hands are unclean, eat not of fruits which were not tithed, do not violate the Sabbath, do not get into the habit of making vows, and walk not with another man. If thou shouldst violate any of the commands, thou wilt die." Another one, who wished to mislead her, did those very things before her that she had been told were sinful: he ate bread when his hands were unclean, partook of fruits which were not tithed, violated the Sabbath, etc., and thereby caused this proselyte to think that everything that her husband told her was entirely false, so she violated all his commandments.

R. Simeon b. Johai said: The case of Adam can be likened to one who, when intending to leave his house, took a barrel and put therein a certain number of dates and nuts; then he caught a scorpion and put it in the top of the barrel, be covered it well and put it in a corner, and said to his wife: "My daughter, everything I have in this house is placed at thy disposal, except this barrel, which thou must touch not at all." As soon as her husband went away, she, however, opened the barrel, put her hand into it, and the scorpion bit her. She took sick and went to her bed. When her husband returned, he asked her what the trouble was. She said: "I put my hand in the barrel, and the scorpion bit me, and I am dying." He said to her: "Did I not tell thee before that thou must not touch the barrel?" He became angry, and drove her out of his house. The same happened to Adam when the Holy One, blessed be He, told him: "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for on the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"; but as soon as he did eat he was Chasen out of the Garden of Eden, and this is what the passage said [Ps. xlix.] (see above).

On the same day on which he was formed, on the very same day his countenance was created; on the very same day he was made a body, and his members were joined and his openings developed, and on the very same day the soul was put unto him. On the same day he stood upon his feet, and Eve was mated to him. On the same day he pronounced the names of all the creatures, and on the very same day he was placed in the Garden of Eden and received the command (not to eat, etc.), and on the very same day he violated it and was Chasen out, to comply with what is written [Ps. xlix.] (see above). On the same day they went to bed two, and descended from the bed four. R. Jehudah b. Bathyra, however, says that they descended six (two sons and two daughters). On that day three sentences were pronounced over Adam, as it is written [Gen. iii. 17, 18]: "And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, etc., cursed be the ground for thy sake, in pain shalt thou eat of it, etc., and thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herbs of the field." As soon as Adam the First heard that the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "And thou shalt eat the herbs of the field," he trembled in his whole body. He said before Him: "Lord of the Universe, shalt I and my cattle eat out of the same trough?" Said the Holy One, blessed be He: "As thou hast trembled, therefore in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" [ibid., ibid. 19].

As Adam was laid under three sentences, likewise was it with Eve. As it is written [ibid., ibid. 16]: "I will greatly multiply thy pain and (the suffering of) thy conception; in pain shalt thou bring forth children." The first few days of menstruation are painful. So also are the first few moments of her sexual intercourse with a man. Also when the woman becomes pregnant, her face loses its beauty and becomes yellow the first three months.

When evening drew near, and Adam, looking toward the west, saw that it was becoming darker and darker, he said: "Woe to me is this, because I have sinned, that the Lord darkens the world upon me!" He did not know that it was the course of nature. In the morning, when he saw it lighted up and the sun risen in the east, he rejoiced greatly. He built an altar and sacrificed on it as a burnt-offering an ox, the horns of which were formed before his hoofs. (Rashi explains this elsewhere as follows: All the creatures of the first days of creation were created in their full-grown sizes, and as the head was formed first the horns thereon preceded the hoofs in point of time. This means to say that Adam sacrificed an ox of the first creation.) As it is written [Ps. lxix. 32]: "And this will please the Lord better than an ox or bullock having horns and cloven hoofs."

(There is a tradition) that the ox of Adam, the steer of Noah, the ram sacrificed by Abraham in place of his son, were all of the first creation, as it is written [Gen. xxii. 13]: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there was a ram Achar" (another one, which signifies that it was one differing from the usual ones). At that time (of the sacrifice of the ox, the Holy One, blessed be He, became merciful to him and) three divisions of angels came down with harps, and psalteries, and all musical instruments, and they sang with Adam, as it is written [Ps. xcii. 1-3]: "A psalm song for the Sabbath day. It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, etc. To tell in the morning of thy kindness, and of thy faithfulness in the nights." "To tell in the morning of thy kindness," this means the world to come, which is likened to the morning, as it is written [Lam. iii. 23]: "They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness"; and [Ps. xcii.] "And of thy faithfulness in the night" means this world, which is likened to night, as it is written [Is. xxi. 11]: "The doom of Dumah. Unto me one calleth out of Se'ir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

The Holy One, blessed be He, said then: "If I will not punish the serpent, that would be as if I Myself were destroying the world, because it would be said that the one that I set up as king over the entire world has disobeyed My command and ate of the forbidden fruit"; therefore immediately He turned to the serpent and cursed him, as it is written [Gen. iii. 14]: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent," etc. R. Jose said: "If the serpent had not been cursed, the world would have been destroyed immediately afterward."

When God created Adam, He formed him with two countenances, front and back, as it is written [Ps. cxxxix. 5]: "Behind and before hast thou hedged me in, and thou placest upon me thy hand." And the angels came down to serve him, and the Holy One, blessed be He, took him under His wings, as it is written: "And thou placest upon me thy hand."

According to others, from this passage is to be inferred that Adam and the Temple were both created with both hands. This view is supported by the following passages [Ps. cxix. 73]: "Thy hands have made me and established me"; and it is also written about the Temple [Ex. xv. 17]: "The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established."

**Abarbanel On Pirqe Abot**

**Mishna 1:1**

**Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and handed it on to Joshua and Joshua [handed/gospelled it down] to the Elders and the Elders [handed/gospelled it down] to the Prophets and the Prophets handed/gospelled it downn to the men of the Great Assembly. They said three things: Be deliberate in judgment; raise up (make stand) many disciples and make a fence around the Torah.**

On this first Mishnah of PirqeAbotAbarbanel raises six questions:

1. When the Mishnah proclaims that Moshe received the Torah from Sinai, it is not clear what the words, "from Sinai," mean. To take it literally that he received the Torah from the mountain is untenable, because it was God who revealed the Torah and not Mt. Sinai. If so, why did the author of the Mishnahnot specify that Moshe received the Torah from God. On the other hand, if, "from Sinai" means "at Sinai" or "on Sinai," the Mishnahshould have used the word “Be-Sinai,” on, or at, Mt. Sinai, and not “Mi-Sinai.”

Furthermore, Abarbanel refuses to accept the interpretation that "from Sinai" means, "from the time of Sinai" because it is taught that the Children of Israel received certain Mitzvot- such as the laws of Shabbat - even before Sinai.

1. Among the logical candidates for the leadership of the people after the demise of Moshe was a saintly man and a bold heroic personality, Elazar, the high priest to whom even Joshua was to be subordinate, as it is written, "And he [Joshua) shall stand before Elazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him ... before the Lord. At his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, even all the congregation" (Numbers 27:21). This high priest was to guide the daily lives of the entire people. Surely High Priest Elazar should have been given pre­ference over Joshua.

1. Abarbanel then questions the accuracy of the sequence of genera­tions as listed in the Mishnah, How can the Mishnahsay that the Elders that followed Joshua relayed the Torah to the Prophets? The Elders of Joshua's times never reached the era of the Prophets.

1. Continuing the attack, Abarbanel cannot understand why the Elders transmitted the Torah to the Prophets. Moshe obviously wanted the leaders of the people to be given the Torah. That is why he gave it to Joshua and for the same reason Joshua gave it to the Elders. Following this policy, the Elders should have given the Torah to the kings who fulfilled the function of the Elders.

1. Furthermore, by what right did the Elders pass on the Torah to the Prophets? Moshe, following God's instructions, handed on the Torah to sages, not prophets, and indeed, in one dispute in the Talmud, Rabbi Eliezer proves his point by invoking miraculous portents, but Rabbi Yehoshua rejected them, saying, "The Torah is not in Heaven." Rabbi Yirmiyahu explained this as meaning that once the Torah was given at Sinai, decisions are to be reached by normative rules and not by prophecy. If so, where did the Elders get the authority to hand the Torah over to the Prophets?

1. Abarbanel questions the three dicta that are proffered: "Be delibe­rate in judgment, raise up (make stand) many disciples and make a fence around the Torah." Why are these values more important than the host of values that Judaism teaches? Furthermore, the Mishnahuses the term, "They said." Who are "they" - the Elders, the Prophets or the men of the Great Assembly?

Abarbanel begins his interpretation of the Mishnahwith a compari­son between the physical genealogy of Adam and the spirituality of Moshe. It is a truism that one generation of a species begets the next generation through the natural process of conception and birth. Adam, the first human, however, was not born; he was created by God from the dust, without biological parents. He was a unique phenomenon in the genetics of mankind. So it was with Moshe from a spiritual pers­pective. Here, too, it is a human characteristic that one person learns from another and relays that knowledge to a successor, each one either approving, disapproving, or improving on the previous teacher. Not so with Moshe. God Himself infused into Moshe the knowledge and wis­dom of the Torah and it was from Moshe that all succeeding genera­tions learned.

Why did Moshe merit this singular experience? What brought about this remarkable honor for Moshe? Abarbanel is quick and forthright in his reply: Sinai. It was the intensive, soul searching solitude on Mt. Sinai, divested of all human needs and desires, and an overpowering sensitivity to divine inspiration that made Moshe worthy of receiving the Torah. These were the ingredients that went into a super-saintly lifestyle that approached Godliness.

To augment this line of thinking, Abarbanel cites the dispute bet­ween Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehudah (Song of Songs Rabbah2:4) on the verse, "He brought me to the house of wine and his flag was over me with love." Rabbi Meir interprets this as follows: The Congregation of Israel complained, "God overpowered me with the evil inclination, until we proclaimed the Golden Calf as god**," just as wine confuses the mind. Rabbi Yehudah castigates Rabbi Meir and states that Song of Songs was meant to elevate and edify the Jewish people, not to deni­grate and deprecate them**. According to Rabbi Yehudah the verse is to be interpreted as follows: The Congregation of Israel praised God because He had brought them into a huge wine cellar (i.e., Mt. Sinai) and given them the flag of Torah and Mitzvotwhich they accepted with love. In the light of this Midrash, says Abarbanel, we can understand the Biblical verse (Exodus 24:12), "Come up to Me into the mount, and be there; and I will give you the tablets of stone and the law and commandments which I have written, so you may teach them." God wanted Moshe to ascend the sacred mountain - the vast reservoir of Torah and Godly wisdom - and remain there not as a simple, normal human being, but rather as one who has transcended every vestige of corporal being. Only in that manner could Moshe have received the word of God.

Briefly and succinctly put, the phrase "from Sinai," is to be under­stood as "because of the experience on Mt. Sinai." Abarbanel gives an example of the prefix “Mi” being used in this sense. The Torah which Moshe handed on to Joshua was the Oral Law, the interpretations he had received from God on Sinai when he was in that exalted state. It cannot refer to the written Torah because once Moshe committed it to writing, it was available to all. Thus, Abarbanel's first question is answered.

Moshe displayed every characteristic of leadership. It was he who urged the Children of Israel to stand firm and infused in them a sense of trust in God; it was he who led them out of Egypt and guided them for 40 years in the wilderness; and it was he who ascended Sinai and through self-denial and herculean determination brought the Torah down to the people. **Nothing was handed to him on a platter; he had to work, strive and battle for every achievement.**

When the unavoidable time came for him to pass on, it is noteworthy that although he may have had a perfect right to do so, he did not ask God to permit one of his own sons to succeed him. Nepotism had no place in Moshe's scheme of succession. He realized that none of his children nor any other member of his immediate family had the neces­sary leadership qualities, and so he passed on the perfection which he had acquired at Sinai to Joshua, who did. However, you may object, Moshe had no choice in the matter, since God Himself told him to appoint Joshua as his successor! Not so, says Abarbanel. He bolsters this thought by alerting us to the Biblical account of the succession (Numbers 27:16-23). Moshe did not ask God, as he could have done, to appoint one of his sons as his successor, but begged God, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh set a man over the congregation ... that they be not as sheep which have no shepherd." God replied, "Take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is spirit and lay your hand upon him ... and he will stand before Elazar, the priest, who will inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the Lord ... " What all this means is: Moshe informed God that he would have been more than honored to have someone of his family succeed him, particularly after all the toil he put into acquiring the leadership. However, You, 0 Lord, are the God of all spirits and You know that none of my family is suitable. You do the choosing and I will abide by Your decision. There­fore God chose Joshua because his life simulated that of Moshe. Moshe isolated himself on Mt. Sinai to be taught the Torah; Joshua isolated himself within the immediate vicinity of Moshe and was taught the Torah by him. This is in accordance with the Talmudic dictum (Berakhot 7b): **"Ministering to a Torah scholar is preferable to studying Torah from him."**

Even Elazar, the high priest, who was certainly a scholar and saint, could not succeed to the leadership because he was never totally encapsulated in the aura and personality of Moshe. This clarifies Abarbanel's second dilemma.

Concerning the authenticity of the historical sequence that evolves in our Mishnah*,*Abarbanel followed the path of least resistance and contends that the author had no intentions of giving us a resume of ancient history. His main purpose was to inform us that during the entire period between Joshua and the kings - the period of the Judges - the following procedure of selecting a leader was practiced: Begin­ning with Joshua every generation had a **bet-din**and it was the mem­bers of the **bet-din**who selected the leader. This continued until the period of the Prophets.

What was of more serious concern to Abarbanel was the question why eventually the Torah tradition was transferred to the Prophets and not to the kings.

To answer this Abarbanel refreshes our recollection and reminds us that the kings of the Kingdom of Israel were all, without exception, men who became idolaters. Even in the Kingdom of Judah, most of those who reigned were in the same category. Under these circumstances, the Elders were opposed to transferring the Torah tradition into the hands of the kings. This solves the third and the fourth problems.

What is the function of a prophet? One might think that since there is communication between God and the prophet, the latter is a man of superior knowledge and wisdom. Hence, when the era of Prophets arrived on the stage of Jewish history it would logically follow that the Elders would transmit their tradition to them. This is not true. Accord­ing to Abarbanel, the Prophets received the tradition from the preced­ing generation only because they were great scholars and not just because they were endowed with the gift of prophecy. In fact, it is stated in the Jerusalem Talmud (Yevamot 12:1) that in the ceremony of Halitzah*,*the ritual of releasing a childless woman from being bound to marry her dead husband's brother, the rabbis interpreted the verses to mean that a shoe must be used, and even if Elijah, the great prophet, were to pronounce a sandal to be equally acceptable he must be ig­nored. **The power of prophecy alone does not endow its holder with the right to be a decisor of Jewish law.** Abarbanel, however, agrees that, all things being equal, a learned prophet will understand Torah better than a learned non-prophet. This resolves the fifth dilemma.

In the view of Abarbanel there are three ways in which a person can acquire Torah wisdom. The first is concentration on study. This is what the sages of the Talmud meant when they said, "Let no one say, 'I toiled but did not find'." (Megillah 6b). **If one will only put a great deal of effort into his studies, he will emerge a scholar.** According to Abarbanel, this is the thrust of "Be deliberate in judgment."

Secondly, **to become erudite in Torah one must be prepared to accept the variegated approach of the subject matter and study together with other scholars.** Profound knowledge is complex; acute wisdom is intri­cate. Nothing may be casually ignored; no opinion may be underrated. When a person studies Torah alone, he will find difficulties which he is unable to answer, whereas in group study, he will find help.

There is a fascinating dispute in the Midrash (Kohelet Rabbah7:49) which touches on this theme. The School of Shammai held that an academy of Torah should not accept students who are not Torah ­oriented, talented, and God-fearing. In the absence of these qualifica­tions, it is a waste of time and effort to instruct these inferior students. The School of Hillel, however, were more lenient and urged the acade­mies to accept all students because if one hundred begin the study of Chumash, ten may emerge qualified to study Mishnah. Out of these ten there are good chances that one may emerge who will be qualified to study Talmud. In fact, it once happened that before he began his lecture Hillel asked whether all the students were present. The reply was that all were present and accounted for except for one who was the most insignificant of them all - the one who was later to become the great Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai who saved Judaism after the destruction of the Temple. By citing this source, Abarbanel was intimating that no one can tell in advance who will eventually turn out to be a master and teacher in Israel. It is in that light, that the author of the Mishnah urged us to raise up (make stand) many disciples.

**The third way to acquire perfect Torah wisdom is to eschew the easiest and most comfortable way of resolving difficult problems**. If one is in doubt, he should follow the more stringent path, because in that he is taking no risk of transgressing. In rabbinic terms this is referred to as "making a fence for the law."

According to Abarbanel, the ones who propounded these three ways of ensuring Torah knowledge enumerated in the Mishnahwere the Prophets. **By their prophetic ability, they foresaw a retreat and diminu­tion in religious commitment in the lives of the masses and were convinced that when the last prophets, such as Zachariah and Malachi, died, all prophecy would end.**At that time, the continuity of the Oral Law would depend on the non-prophetic sages, beginning with the men of the Great Assembly and so they counselled them that the state of their Torah knowledge would depend on these three courses of action. This answers Abarbanel's sixth question.

Abarbanel concludes his interpretation of the first Mishnah with an interesting insight. Until we reach the men of the Great Assembly, the chain of tradition is described according to the transmitter - Moshe to Joshua, Joshua to the Elders, etc. From here on, however, the chain will be listed according to the receivers - Antigonus ... received the tradition from Shimon ha-Zaddik (Mishnah3), Yosi ben Yoezer ... re­ceived it from them ... (Mishnah4), etc. We are not told, for example, that Shimon ha-Zaddik passed it on (gospelled it down) to Antigonus. **This is because our Mishnah ends with the advice to raise up (make stand) many disciples and the men of the Great Assembly followed that advice; from now on the stress is, therefore, on the disciples who receive, rather than on the teachers who transmit (gospel down).**

**Miscellaneous Interpretations**

***Be deliberate in judgment***

**Rabbenu Yonah**inquires why the Mishnah requires caution in judgment and does not advise caution in any other facet of life. He replies that every other facet of life would be meaningless were it not for the strength of the law. What would all the morals and values taught by the Torah be if they would not have the backing and support of a legal system to ensure their credibility? To embellish his line of thinking, he cites a Midrash(Exodus Rabbah30:3) which equates the Torah with the royal matron who is in the habit of having equestrians ride before and after her carriage to protect her and so demonstrate her regal position. So, it is with the Torah: The laws that were given to the Children of Israel prior to Mt. Sinai and those that followed Mt. Sinai were meant to shield the essence of the Torah. Thus, the exhortation, "Be cautious in the administration of the law."

**Midrash Shemuel**addresses himself to the same question Rabbenu Yonah raised, and muses that when a court is about to come to a decision it should be cautious in its deliberations because it can be reversed by an appellate court. This, of course, would lend no honor or dignity to the court that comes to a decision hastily.

He also cites an authority who argues that "be cautious" applies not to the judges, but to the litigants. That is to say, persons who have a dispute are urged not to hasten into litigation but rather to seek a compromise. When litigants are anxious for a judicial decision they are already enemies; in a compromise they can retain their friendship.

**Ritva**offers two interpretations of this Mishnah:

1. The term **“Be cautious”** is closely associated with the word**“a gift.”** The inference is that if a judge wishes to avoid the temptation of bribery, let him think in terms of granting his decision as a gift to the litigants.

1. **“Be cautious”**is also phonetically close in Hebrew to **“to be placed.”** Here the inference is that the judges are required to be deliberate because it is very possible they will find themselves placed in a position where instead of judging others they, themselves, will be judged. Every jurist knows that he would like to be judged with exactitude and patience.

***Raise up (make stand) many disciples***

**Midrash Shemuel**is confident that when a master rears a generation of disciples, even if they are not on the same scholastic level as he is, the consequences can only be favorable, in that he can always learn something of value from them. The master himself has not reached the apex of wisdom and even a subordinate can come up with valuable ideas. Furthermore, the authentic mark of a Jew is his familiarity with Torah learning. By raising up more and more disciples and making them stand, the master indelibly marks the true character of a Jew on an increasing number of individuals.

**Hakham Yosef ben Haggai**– The obligation of Masters of Torah is not only to instruct, and “gospel down” the Massorah, but also and more important is to make sure that each Talmid is able to find a congregation in which to exercise his gifts in imitation of his master.

***Make a fence around the Torah***

**Midrash Shemuel:**It is the nature of man to seek out those things that are forbidden to him because in most instances they are more pleasurable. It is much easier to steal than to work hard and toil to make a living and thus avoid stealing. The commandments of the Torah are comprised of a host of negative injunctions, but man has a strong urge to disobey them. Therefore, the Torah may be compared to a castle surrounded by a moat. First, the invading enemy must cross the moat before he can enter the stronghold. This moat is the decrees of the rabbis who strengthened the position of the laws of the Torah.

**Rabbenu Yonah**opines that if we are to say that the rulings of the rabbis serve as a fence around the Torah, it then follows that when a man meticulously follows the teachings of the rabbis which are more stringent, he demonstrates his pro­found love of, and attachment to, the commandments of the Torah.

**Verbal Tallies**

By: H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David & HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

**Shemot (Exodus) 30:1-38, Tehillim (Psalms) 66, Malachi 1:11 – 2:7, Mark 8:22-26**

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:**

Make / Offer - **עשה**, Strong’s number 06213.

Incense - **קטרת**, Strong’s number 07004.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:**

Pure - טהור, Strong’s number 02889.

Incense - **קטר**, Strong’s number 06999. (This a related word , to our Torah portion, with the same three letter root.)

**Shemot (Exodus) 30:1** And thou shalt **make <06213> (8804)** an altar to burn **incense <07004>** upon: of shittim wood shalt thou **make <06213> (8799)** it. 2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. 3 And thou shalt overlay it with **pure <02889>** gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt **make <06213**> (8804) unto it a crown of gold round about.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 66:15** I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the **incense <07004>** of rams; I will **offer <06213> (8799)** bullocks with goats. Selah.

**Malachi 1:11** For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place **incense <06999>** (8716) shall be offered unto my name, and a **pure <02889>** offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex. 30:1-38** | **Psalms**  **66:1-20** | **Ashlamatah**  **Mal. 1:11 – 2:7** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ~d'a' | anyone's, men | Exod. 30:32 | Ps. 66:5 |  |
| yn"doa] | Lord |  | Ps. 66:18 | Mal. 1:12  Mal. 1:14 |
| rm;a' | saying | Exod. 30:11  Exod. 30:17  Exod. 30:22  Exod. 30:31  Exod. 30:34 | Ps. 66:3 | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:12  Mal. 1:13  Mal. 1:14  Mal. 2:2  Mal. 2:4 |
| aAB | enter, went, brought, bring | Exod. 30:20 | Ps. 66:11  Ps. 66:12  Ps. 66:13 | Mal. 1:13 |
| tyIB; | holders, house | Exod. 30:4 | Ps. 66:13 |  |
| !Be | sons | Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:14  Exod. 30:16  Exod. 30:19  Exod. 30:30  Exod. 30:31  Ps. 66:5  Mal. 1:6 | Ps. 66:5 |  |
| yAG | nations |  | Ps. 66:7 | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:14 |
| rb;D' | spoke, speak | Exod. 30:11  Exod. 30:17  Exod. 30:22  Exod. 30:31 | Ps. 66:14 |  |
| %l;h' | come, walked |  | Ps. 66:5  Ps. 66:16 | Mal. 2:6 |
| hz< | this | Exod. 30:13  Exod. 30:31 |  | Mal. 2:1  Mal. 2:4 |
| [r'z< | descendants, offspring | Exod. 30:21 |  | Mal. 2:3 |
| rAhj' | pure | Exod. 30:3  Exod. 30:35 |  | Mal. 1:11 |
| dy" | hands | Exod. 30:19  Exod. 30:21 |  | Mal. 1:13 |
| hwhy | LORD | Exod. 30:8  Exod. 30:10  Exod. 30:11  Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:13  Exod. 30:14  Exod. 30:15  Exod. 30:16  Exod. 30:17  Exod. 30:20  Exod. 30:22  Exod. 30:34  Exod. 30:37 |  | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:13  Mal. 1:14  Mal. 2:2  Mal. 2:4  Mal. 2:7 |
| yKi | when | Exod. 30:12 |  | Mal. 2:2 |
| lKo | everyone, all, whole, entire, every | Exod. 30:13  Exod. 30:14  Exod. 30:27  Exod. 30:28  Exod. 30:29 | Ps. 66:1  Ps. 66:4  Ps. 66:16 | Mal. 1:11 |
| @s,K, | money | Exod. 30:16 | Ps. 66:10 |  |
| aol | no, nor | Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:32 | Ps. 66:20 |  |
| ble | heart |  | Ps. 66:18 | Mal. 2:2 |
| hm' | what, how |  | Ps. 66:3 | Mal. 1:13 |
| ~yIm; | water | Exod. 30:18  Exod. 30:20 | Ps. 66:12 |  |
| hx'n>mi | meal offering | Exod. 30:9 |  | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:13 |
| vg"n" | approach, going to be offered | Exod. 30:20 |  | Mal. 1:11 |
| vp,n< | himself, yourselves, soul | Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:15  Exod. 30:16 | Ps. 66:16 |  |
| af'n" | carry, taken, take | Exod. 30:4  Exod. 30:12 |  | Mal. 2:3 |
| !t;n" | put, give | Exod. 30:6  Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:13  Exod. 30:14  Exod. 30:15  Exod. 30:16  Exod. 30:18  Exod. 30:33  Exod. 30:36 | Ps. 66:9 | Mal. 2:2  Mal. 2:5 |
| l[; | over, toward | Exod. 30:6 | Ps. 66:5 |  |
| hl'[' | trims, shall not offer | Exod. 30:8  Exod. 30:9 | Ps. 66:15 |  |
| hP, | mouth |  | Ps. 66:14  Ps. 66:17 | Mal. 2:6  Mal. 2:7 |
| ~ynIP' | in front, face | Exod. 30:6  Exod. 30:8  Exod. 30:16  Exod. 30:36 |  | Mal. 2:3 |
| rj;q' | shall burn | Exod. 30:7  Exod. 30:8  Exod. 30:20 |  | Mal. 1:11 |
| tr,joq. | incense | Exod. 30:1  Exod. 30:7  Exod. 30:8  Exod. 30:9  Exod. 30:27  Exod. 30:35  Exod. 30:37 | Ps. 66:15 |  |
| vaor | head, | Exod. 30:12  Exod. 30:23 | Ps. 66:12 |  |
| lg<r, | feet, foot | Exod. 30:19  Exod. 30:21 | Ps. 66:6  Ps. 66:9 |  |
| ~Wf | make, keeps, laid, take |  | Ps. 66:2  Ps. 66:9  Ps. 66:11 | Mal. 2:2 |
| !x'l.vu | table | Exod. 30:27 |  | Mal. 1:12 |
| ~v' | where, there | Exod. 30:6  Exod. 30:36 | Ps. 66:6 |  |
| ~ve | name |  | Ps. 66:2  Ps. 66:4 | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:14  Mal. 2:2  Mal. 2:5 |
| [m;v' | hear, sound |  | Ps. 66:8  Ps. 66:16  Ps. 66:18  Ps. 66:19 | Mal. 2:2 |
| hp'f' | lips |  | Ps. 66:14 | Mal. 2:6  Mal. 2:7 |
| ~yYIx; | life |  | Ps. 66:9 | Mal. 2:5 |
| arey" | awesome, feared |  | Ps. 66:3  Ps. 66:5  Ps. 66:16 | Mal. 1:14  Mal. 2:5 |
| dAbK' | glory |  | Ps. 66:2 | Mal. 2:2 |
| hl'[o | burnt offering | Exod. 30:9  Exod. 30:28 | Ps. 66:13  Ps. 66:15 |  |
| hf'[' | do, make, made, did, done | Exod. 30:1  Exod. 30:3  Exod. 30:4  Exod. 30:5  Exod. 30:18  Exod. 30:25  Exod. 30:32  Exod. 30:35  Exod. 30:37  Exod. 30:38 | Ps. 66:15  Ps. 66:16 |  |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex. 30:1-38** | **Psalms**  **66:1-20** | **Ashlamatah**  **Mal. 1:11 – 2:7** | **Peshat**  **Mishnah of**  **Mk 8:22-26** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἅπτομαι** | touching | Exo 30:29 |  |  | Mar 8:22 |
| **εἰσέρχομαι** | will enter |  | Psa 66:13 |  | Mk. 8:26 |
| **ἐξάγω** | led |  | Psa 66:12 |  | Mar 8:23 |
| **ἐξέρχομαι** | going, left |  |  |  | Matt. 9:32 |
| **ἔξω** | outside |  |  |  | Mar 8:23 |
| **ἐπιτίθημι** | placed upon, laying |  |  | Mal 1:12 | Mk. 8:23  Mk. 8:25 |
| **ἔπω** | speak, say, said | Exo 30:34 | Psa 66:3 | Mal 1:13 | Mar 8:26 |
| **λέγω** | saying, | Exod. 30:11  Exod. 30:17  Exod. 30:22  Exod. 30:31  Exod. 30:34 |  | Mal. 1:11  Mal. 1:12  Mal. 1:13  Mal. 1:14  Mal. 2:2  Mal. 2:4 | Mk. 8:24  Mk. 8:26 |
| **οἶκος** | house |  | Ps. 66:13 |  | Mk. 8:26 |
| **ὀφθαλμός** | eyes |  | Psa 66:7 |  | Mk. 8:25 |
| **παρακαλέω** | implored, begging |  |  |  | Mk. 8:22 |
| **χείρ** | hand | Exod. 30:19  Exod. 30:21 |  | Mal. 1:13 | Mk. 8:23  Mk. 8:25 |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of Shmot (Ex.) 30:1-38**

**“VaAsita Mitzbeach” “And you will make an altar”**

By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

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| --- |
| **Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk) 8:22-26**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **And they came to Bet Tzaida.[[41]](#footnote-41) And some people brought to him** (Yeshua) **a blind man and implored him that he would touch[[42]](#footnote-42) him. And he** (Yeshua) **took hold of the blind man’s hand** and **led him outside the village, and** after **putting saliva into his eyes, he placed his hands on him** (his head – the place where the phylacteries lay)and **asked him, “Do you see anything?” And looking up[[43]](#footnote-43)** into the heavens (receiving his sight)[[44]](#footnote-44) **he said, “I see[[45]](#footnote-45) people, for I** seethem **walking around like** (Oak) **trees.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Then he placed his hands on his eyes again, and he opened his eyes and was cured, and could see everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not return to the village.”** |

**Nazarean Codicil to be read in conjunction with the following Torah Seder (#068)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ex 30:1-38** | **Ps 66:1-20** | **Mal 1:11-2:7** | **Mk 8:22-26** |

**Commentary to Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**

**The Result of Chametz (leaven)**

The text seems to suggest a gradual healing. Yet, has nothing to do with Yeshua’s ability to “heal” per se. If this is a gradual healing the problem is in the receptacle.[[47]](#footnote-47) These events seem to be paralleled in other places. However, the “parallels” are not significant in the present pericope. The point Hakham Tsefet is trying to make is not that Yeshua was a “healer.”[[48]](#footnote-48) His point is to allow the interaction between Yeshua and the person healed to tell a story that will unfold, a special truth. The truth of gradual healing shows us that people grasp the word of the Torah at different paces. Some hear the Torah, and are “immediately” affected by its words. Others are slower to grasp the meaning of Torah concepts. This is in no way a reflection of character or intelligence.

The amazing fact is that this pericope is presently juxtaposed against the anointing of the Kohanim (Priesthood). Rashi’s words from above are:

Shemot 30:30 You shall also anoint Aaron and his sons, consecrating them to serve Me as priests. [Compare to Kereithoth 5b]

The Psalmist[[49]](#footnote-49) tells us that the anointing oil ran down the beard of Aaron. One would ponder if any of that oil got in his eyes. We must realize that Corral Hermeneutics demands that we understand something from the Torah is being elucidated here in the pericope of Mordechai. Or, that the Torah portion we are reading in some way elucidates what is happening with the blind man. Therefore, we must ask what we are to learn from the Torah portion coupled with this pericope of Mordechai.

As Rashi and the Ramban have pointed out the methods for anointing are found in the Babylonian Talmud tractate K'rithoth 5b. This section of the Talmud discusses the process of anointing, who can be anointed and how. We find this Gemarah very interesting in that it is related to the principle qualifications of Messiah, “the Anointed One.” What we also find interesting is that while Yeshua does not “anoint” the blind man, but he does rub spittle on his head and eyes in a manner described in the Gemarah.

﻿**b. K'rithoth 5b** Our Rabbis have taught: In anointing kings one draws the figure of a crown,[[50]](#footnote-50) and with priests in the shape of the letter chi. Said R. Menashia: The Greek-[letter] **χ** (chi) is meant. One [Tanna] teaches: The oil was first poured over the head and then smeared between the eye-lids; whereas another [Tanna] teaches: The oil was first smeared between the eye-lids and then poured over the head.[[51]](#footnote-51) [On this point there is] a dispute of Tannaim: One holds that the anointing[[52]](#footnote-52) has preference; the other holds that the pouring has preference. What is the reason of him who holds that the pouring has preference? He derives it from: And he poured from the anointing oil upon Aaron's head [and anointed him to sanctify him]. And he who maintains anointing has preference holds [his view] because this was the method employed in connection with the vessels of ministry.[[53]](#footnote-53) But is it not written first: And he poured, and then, and anointed? This is what it means: Wherefore did he pour the oil, because he had already anointed him to sanctify him.

Our Rabbis have taught: It is like the precious oil upon the head [coming down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard].[[54]](#footnote-54) Two drops of the oil were hanging down like pearls from Aaron's beard. Said R. Kahana; It was taught, When he [Aaron] spoke, the drops moved upwards and rested by the roots of his beard. This caused anxiety to Moses. Perhaps, Heaven forfend, [he said] I have committed sacrilege with the oil of anointing![[55]](#footnote-55) But a heavenly voice was heard, saying: Like the dew of the Hermon, that cometh down upon the mountains of Zion;[[56]](#footnote-56) as the dew is not subject to sacrilege, so the oil that cometh down upon the beard of Aaron is not subject to sacrilege. Yet Aaron was still worried: Although Moses did not commit sacrilege, I myself am guilty of sacrilege. Thereupon the heavenly voice pronounced: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity:[[57]](#footnote-57) As Moses is not guilty of sacrilege, so thou too art not guilty of sacrilege.

So, why do we have the present narrative with a blind man and spittle? Hakham Tsefet is certainly aware of the fact that these readings will illuminate the character of Messiah. While we learn from the Rambam, that miracles and healing **do not** authenticate man or ministry[[58]](#footnote-58). If we believe, that Yeshua needed to do miracles to prove that he is Messiah we have put our confidence in the wrong man! Yeshua performed miracles like Moshe Rabbenu. Moshe Rabbenu performed miracles out of need not a want of aggrandizement or proof that he was a prophet. If there is a need for self-aggrandizement it will most certainly be met. Unfortunately, therein is the reward for a moment of fame.

The subtheme is right before our eyes. Yeshua heals by means of spittle. This is in and of itself is a prophecy per se. We recently saw that Yeshua healed a deaf man with spittle. What statement does Yeshua make when he heals by means of spittle? Healing by means of spittle is an exercise in authority, specifically the authority of the firstborn.

**Bava.Batra 126b** A certain [Person once] came before R. Hanina [and] said to him, ‘I am certain that this [man] is firstborn.’ He said to him, ‘How do you know [this]?’ — [The other] replied to him,: ‘Because when [people] came to his father,[[59]](#footnote-59) he used to say to then,: Go to my son Shikhath, **Who is firstborn and his spittle heals’. — Might he not have been the firstborn of his mother [only]? — There is a tradition that the spittle of the firstborn of a father is healing, but that of the firstborn of a mother is not healing.**

Aaron is a firstborn son. As firstborn and first Levitical Priest, he establishes precedent for all those who would function as Kohanim. Hakham Tsefet Shows that Yeshua is the firstborn and therefore, entitled by birthright to the Priesthood of the firstborn. Should the Levitical Priesthood become defunct it will be the right of Messiah to usurp that authority. When Yochanan the Immerser witnessed the immersion of Yeshua, he effectively passed the Levitical Priesthood back to the Firstborn. As Messiah and firstborn, Yeshua was a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Hakham Tsefet’s subliminal message is that The Anointed Messiah is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. The Priestly office (of Melchizedek) restored to the firstborn is **eternal.**

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this week, which particular verse or passage caught your attention and fired your heart and imagination?
2. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message (the idea that encapsulates all the Scripture passages read) for this week.

**Blessing After Torah Study**

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,**

**Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.**

**Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem our GOD, King of the universe,**

**Who has given us a teaching of truth, implanting within us eternal life.**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!**

**“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish,**

**before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one GOD, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”**

## Next Shabbat: Iyar 10, 5784

**“R’eh Qarati” – Sabbath: “See, I have called”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **רְאֵה, קָרָאתִי** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“R’Eh Qarati”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 31:1-6 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 32:15-17 |
| **“See, I have called”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 31:7-11 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 32:18-20 |
| **“Mira, he llamado”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 31:12-14 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 32:21-23 |
|  | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 31:15-17 |  |
| Shemot (Exodus) 31:1 – 32:14 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 31:18- 32:3 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 67:1-8 | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 32:4-8 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 32:15-17 |
| Ashlamatah:  Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 43:7-15, 21 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 32:9-14 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 32:18-20 |
|  | Maftir – Sh’mot 32:12-14 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 32:21-23 |
| Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-21 | Isaiah 43:7-15, 21 |  |

**Yom Ha’atzmaut: Israel Independence Day**

The celebration of Israeli independence is marked each year on the **fifth day of the Hebrew month of Iyar**.

Israel’s Independence Day is celebrated on the fifth day of the month of Iyar, which is the Hebrew date of the formal establishment of the State of Israel, when members of the “provisional government” read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv. The original date corresponded to May 14, 1948.

Most of the Jewish communities in the Western world have incorporated this modern holiday into their calendars, but some North American Jewish communities hold the public celebrations on a following Sunday in order to attract more participation. In the State of Israel it is a formal holiday, so almost everyone has the day off.

**Saturday evening Counting of the Omer Day 19**

Today is nineteen days, which is two weeks and five days of the Omer.

Hod ShebeTiferet

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 19 | Darshan/Parnas 2 | Iyar 4 | 4:1-3 | Compassion united with Sincerity |

**I therefore, the prisoner in the Master** (Yeshua HaMashiach)**, admonish[[60]](#footnote-60) you that you walk[[61]](#footnote-61)** in a manner **worthy of the vocation[[62]](#footnote-62) to which you are called, with all humility[[63]](#footnote-63) and gentleness, with patience, forbearing one another in loving-compassion,[[64]](#footnote-64) striving to keep unity knowing[[65]](#footnote-65) the bond of shalom** (unity – peace).

**Sunday evening Yom HaZikharon – Day of Remembrance**

Today is twenty days, which is two weeks and six days of the Omer.

Yesod ShebeTiferet

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 20 | Darshan/Parnas 3 | Iyar 5 | 4:4-6 | Compassion united with Truth/Honesty |

**There is one[[66]](#footnote-66) body[[67]](#footnote-67) and one soul** (spirit),[[68]](#footnote-68) **even as you are called[[69]](#footnote-69) in one hope[[70]](#footnote-70) of your calling, one Master,[[71]](#footnote-71) one assurance,[[72]](#footnote-72) one** (initial)[[73]](#footnote-73) **immersion, one G-d[[74]](#footnote-74) and Father of all, who is above all and through[[75]](#footnote-75) all and in You all.**

**Monday Evening: Counting of the Omer Day 21**

Today is twenty-one days, which is three weeks of the Omer.

Malchut ShebeTiferet

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 21 | Darshan/Moreh | Iyar 6 | 4:7-10 | Compassion united with Humility |

**But to every one of us is given loving-kindness** (chesed) **according to the measure of the gift of Messiah.[[76]](#footnote-76) Therefore, He** (God) **says, "When he ascended[[77]](#footnote-77) up on high, [[78]](#footnote-78) he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men You have received gifts among men, yes, among the rebellious also, that the Lord God might tabernacle** – **Shakhan there**." (Ps. 68:18).

**Tuesday Evening: Counting of the Omer Day 22**

Today is twenty-two days, which is three weeks and one day of the Omer.

Chesed ShebeNetzach

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 22 | Parnas 1/Masoret | Iyar 7 | 4:11-14 | Confidence united with Loving-kindness |

**And truly** he (Messiah) **gave some to be[[79]](#footnote-79) Masoretim[[80]](#footnote-80)** (catechists/evangelists), **and some to be Chazanim** (Cantors – Apostles of the congregation**), and some to be prophets** (Darshanim/Magidim),[[81]](#footnote-81) **and some to be pastors** (Parnasim), **and some to be** [school] **teachers/translators**)[[82]](#footnote-82) - (Moreh/Meturgeman)**,for the perfecting** (making stand)[[83]](#footnote-83) **of the saints/Tsadiqim[[84]](#footnote-84), for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the congregation of Messiah.And this until we arrive all into the unanimity of faithful obedience and of the intimate knowledge** (Da’at) **of the son of G-d,[[85]](#footnote-85) to a royal man/woman of complete maturity,[[86]](#footnote-86) to the measure of the stature of the fullness[[87]](#footnote-87) of Messiah** (of becoming in complete unity with Messiah)**;so that we no longer may be infants, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind[[88]](#footnote-88)** (fashion) **of teaching, in the dishonesty of men, in cunning craftiness, leading to the scheming of deception.[[89]](#footnote-89)**

**Wednesday Evening: Counting of the Omer Day 23**

Today is twenty-three days, which is three weeks and two days of the Omer.

Gevurah ShebeNetzach

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 23 | Parnas 1/Chazan | Iyar 8 | 4:15-16 | Confidence united with Reverential Awe |

**But that you, teaching the Torah with loving-compassion**, **may grow up** (mature) **in every way** being **in union with him who is the head** (chief)[[90]](#footnote-90), **even Messiah** and his Hakhamim; **from whom the whole congregation** (body)**, fitted together[[91]](#footnote-91) and being united by the support of every joint, each member working properly in their measure to produce the growth of the congregation** (body) **to the building** up **of itself in loving-compassion** (ahavah – charity).[[92]](#footnote-92)

**Thursday Evening: Counting of the Omer Day 24**

Today is twenty-four days, which is three weeks and three days of the Omer.

Tiferet ShebeNetzach

**Then read the following:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| 24 | Parnas 1/Darshan | Iyar 9 | 4:17-19 | Confidence united with Compassion |

**Now I say this, and testify in the Master, that from now on you cannot walk[[93]](#footnote-93) as** (some) **other Gentiles do** (walk**), devoid of truth** (Torah) **in their mind,[[94]](#footnote-94) having a** mental **disposition full of darkness,[[95]](#footnote-95) alienated[[96]](#footnote-96)** (cut off) **from the life of God,[[97]](#footnote-97) their ignorance is due to an unyielding obstinacy of mind.[[98]](#footnote-98) For they, being desensitized, have given themselves up to apostasy,[[99]](#footnote-99) (**and**) to every kind of impurity**.[[100]](#footnote-100)



### Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

**Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

**Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham**

Edited by His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham.

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1. On this day Egypt was afflicted with the first plague, blood for seven days. ***Exodus 7:19***  *Seder Olam 3* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The virtuous power goes beyond imagination and cravings. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Again, we have the compound of potential power realized within us. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The reference to the Officer “Darshan” is mentioned here again in the Greek word **δόξα** – *doxa*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibn Yachya. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Meiri. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Menachem ben Solomon Meiri (1249 – 1306) was a famous Catalan rabbi, Talmudist and Maimonidean. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ovadia ben Jacob Sforno was an Italian rabbi, Biblical commentator, philosopher and physician. He was born at Cesena about 1475 and died at Bologna in 1550. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, Rabbi Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman) known as the Vilna Gaon or Elijah of Vilna, or by his Hebrew acronym HaGra (“HaGaon Rabbenu Eliyahu”) or Elijah Ben Solomon, (Vilnius April 23, 1720 – Vilnius October 9, 1797), was a Talmudist, halakhist, kabbalist, and the foremost leader of mitnagdic (non-Hasidic) Jewry of the past few centuries. He is commonly referred to in Hebrew as ha-Gaon he-Chasid mi-Vilna, “the saintly genius from Vilnius”. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Maaseh Rav 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This introduction was excerpted and edited from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Berachot 34b, as cited by the Rambam (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuva 7:4). Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, commonly known as Maimonides, and also referred to by the acronym Rambam (רמב״ם‎, for Rabbeinu Mōšeh bēn Maimon, “Our Rabbi Moses son of Maimon”), was a medieval Sephardic Jewish philosopher who became one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages. In his time, he was also a preeminent astronomer and physician. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *baalei teshuva* means “lord of return” and is the term for a Jew who has left the mitzvot and later returns to them. See Rambam’s Code of Jewish Law: *Laws of Teshuva* 7:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. This concept is connected with the coming of the Redemption, for the *Zohar* (III, 153b; see also *Likutei Torah, Shir HaShirim,* p. 50b) teaches that *Mashiach* will motivate *tzaddikim* to turn to G‑d in *teshuva.* No matter how complete their divine service, the unbounded dimensions of G‑dliness to be revealed in the Era of the Redemption will make them realize their limitations and will call forth a corre­sponding revelation of the infinite potential that their souls possess. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Repentance [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Yoma 85a [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Makkoth 7b [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Avodah Zarah 4b ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. From IN THE GARDEN OF THE TORAH, by Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, See the Sichos of *Shabbat Parshat Ki Sisal,* 5752. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This word forms a verbal tally with our Torah portion: Make / Offer - עשה, Strong’s number 06213. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Men. 73b; Tem. 2b; compare Maimonides, “Yad,” Ma’ase ha-Ḳorbanot, 3:2, 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:1-17 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The Hebrew term karet (“cutting off”, Hebrew: כרת‎‎, [kaˈret]) is derived from the Hebrew verb karat (“to cut off”). The noun form does not occur in the Hebrew Bible. The plural, Kerithoth (“Excisions”), is the seventh tractate of the fifth order Kodashim of the Mishnah. In the Talmud kareth means not necessarily physical “cutting off” of life but extinction of the soul and denial of a share in the world to come. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. See Psalm 40:7. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Bachya ben Asher ibn Halawa, also known as Rabbeinu Bechaye (1340 – 1255), was a rabbi and scholar of Judaism. He was a commentator on the Hebrew Bible. He is considered by Jewish scholars to be one of the most distinguished of the Biblical exegetes of Spain. He was a pupil of Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet (the Rashba). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Bereshit (Genesis) 8:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Bereshit (Genesis) 22:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Shemot (Exodus) 18:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Abba ben Joseph bar Ḥama (c. 280 – 352 CE), who is exclusively referred to in the Talmud by the name Rava (רבא), was a fourth-generation rabbi (amora) who lived in Mahoza, a suburb of Ctesiphon, the capital of Babylonia. He is one of the most often-cited rabbis in the Talmud. He studied at the Talmudical Academy at Pumbedita, site of modern-day Falluja, Iraq. There he, traditionally, became famous for his debates with his study-partner Abaye. The debates between Abba ben Joseph and Abaye are considered classic examples of Talmudic dialectical logic. Of their hundreds of recorded disputes, the law is decided according to the opinion of Abba ben Joseph in all but six cases. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. I suspect that this is how HaShem viewed Avraham’s offering of Yitzchak at the Akeida. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Rabbi Moses ben Nahman (1194–1270), commonly known as Nachmanides, and also referred to by the acronym Ramban (רמב״ן‎), was a leading medieval Jewish scholar, Spanish Sephardic rabbi, philosopher, physician, kabbalist, and biblical commentator. He was raised, studied, and lived for most of his life in Girona, Catalonia, Spain. He is also considered to be an important figure in the re-establishment of the Jewish community in Jerusalem following its decimation at the hands of the Crusaders in 1099. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See a similar use of the term *atonement* in Bereshit (Genesis) 32:20 when Yaaqov approaches his brother Esav preceded by many gifts [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Zevachim 90a [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, 1040-1105, foremost pshat commentator on the Tanach. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. By Rabbi Ozer Alport [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Vayikra (Leviticus) 6:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Yoma 29a [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Bava Kama 79b [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Possible home of Hakham Tsefet and his brother Adam (Andrew). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. **ἅπτω** – *haptomai* “to touch” is also related to the idea of kindling a fire and making light. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. The blind man **looked up** towards the heavens gaining sight. This “looking up” is related to the point of contact Yeshua made with the blind man’s forehead. Likewise, the connection to the Torah Seder where the ‘incense” “raises up” from the mitzbach – altar. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. We have translated the phrase **ἀναβλέπω** – *anablepo* as looking up and receiving his sight. However, it may be that he recovered his sight having been blinded by some citcumstance. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. France notes that the healing is immediate. The repetition of touching is intriguing. France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark: a Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich. : Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans ; Paternoster Press, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. The Greek word δένδρον – *dendron* is laced with many possibilities such as “fruit trees,” “right hand,” “power” and “secret” not to mention the ideas of covenant, position of authority etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Hooker, Morna Dorothy. *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993. p. 197 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Psa 133:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. I.e., a circle round the head. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. These two centres of oil are joined with one another and extended to the neck, Rashi. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. I.e., the smearing of the forehead. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Lev. VIII vv. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Ps. CXXXIII, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. By using too much of it. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ibid. v. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. ﻿ Ibid. v. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. (Rambam), Maimonides, and Rabbi Eliyahu Touger. *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Yesodei Hatorah: The Laws [Which Are] the Foundations of the Torah*. Moznaim Publishing Corporation, n.d. pp. 282-86 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Complaining of certain pains or eruptions on their bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. **παρακαλέω** – *parakaleo* is paralleled in the Hebrew word “**נִחַם**” which means comfort/strengthen. This gives us a possible connection to the Seven weeks of Nahamu. Hoehner suggests, based on Carl J. Bjerkelund’s work that this is an “Apostolic admonition.” Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians, An Exegetical Commentary.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. pp. 499-500. It is worthy to note that regardless whether this is an “Apostolic admonition” or not Hakham Shaul is directing his “authority” towards the Ephesian community and Congregation. Therefore, the “admonition” carries “Apostolic” (a Hakham’s) weight. We should here note the change of vocabulary. Hakham Shaul (Paul) begins to call the “Body of Messiah” into corporate unity. The language of Darshan in concert with Sincerity shows “legal” application. Here we do not need to be hung up on “legalism.” This is not the point. Our intention here is to see application of the Halakhic system of the Esnoga (Synagogue). Thielman notes the shift from theology to ethics, “from what God has graciously accomplished for His people to how they should live as a result.” Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. This shift is especially important when we realize that we are about to approach Har Sinai. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. **περιπατέω** – *peripateo* calling for a change in conduct. Therefore, **περιπατέω** – *peripateo* calls to mind contrast. In the past you were Gentiles which walked (had the conduct of a Gentile) according to the order of the cosmos, worldly system. Now that you have accepted Judaism you are expected to change your conduct and walk as the Jewish people do. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. The deep sense of **κλῆσις** – *klesis* comes from **καλέω** – *kaleo* to be named or “called” a parallel of Hebrew **קָרָא.** That which, G-d names “calls” is suited for its purpose or duty. The “calling” is that of having been a Gentile estranged from G-d and His covenants of Promise to being conjoined with the Jewish people through conversion. This is the “challenge” that Hakham Shaul is placing before his audience. cf. Nisan 26 above. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Humility is the attribute of deeming others more important. Here we also see protocols of showing other respect and honor. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Here Hakham Shaul is forwarding the true heart of the Jewish people. The Gentiles coming to G-d embraced Judaism because it was a civil, organized and structured. In other words, the Roman populace saw Judaism as being a positive model to emulate. However, they needed to leave behind any dissenting paganism, which they may have retained. While the Gentile is called to Torah Observance he is not called to “legalism.” Hakham Shaul is addressing this issue here at this present juncture by conjoining the Compassion of the Darshan with the 2nd Pastoral officer (Parnas 2) and his attribute of sincerity. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. **Πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* **-** a spirit, i.e. a simple essence, devoid of all or at least all grosser matter, and possessed of **the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting**. The English language uses the idea of “spirit” in very much the same way. We may hear someone say, “that’s the spirit.” This does not refer to **any** “spirit.” It refers to a mindset, knowing you “can” etc. Strong, J. (1996). The exhaustive concordance of the Bible: Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order. (electronic ed.) (G4151). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. An abrupt change in language occurs at this juncture in our reading. This tells us that we are addressing a new officer, i.e. Parnas #3 (the 3rd Pastor. The 3rd Pastor is feminine, associated with the Messianic attribute of Yesod. Furthermore, we now see seven uses of the Greek words for “one.” These seven “ones” can be related to the allegorical mention of the seven officers of the Esnoga (Synagogue). These seven “ones” call for unity in the Congregation of Messiah. The order is reversed and changed horizontally. This would mean that Hakham Shaul is taking an Apostolic (Hakham’s) view of the congregation looking down on it from above, or from the heavenlies (heavens). **ἐπουράνιος** compound επι and ουράνιος point of origin being "from the heavens" the spiritual environs of the ethereal world. (see v4 below) Therefore, “from the heavens” means that the decisions (halakhic judgments which from the Bench of three are the judgments which are “binding on earth” because they have been made in the spiritual world. The view of the letter is from the heavens or “heavenlies.” [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. **σῶμα** – *soma* is the natural body of any human being. However, here we have an allegorical use of **σῶμα** – *soma* relating it to the “body of Messiah.” [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Entries for **πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* in any lexicon are so plentiful that it is often hard to determine the true meaning of the word. There are 123 pages discussing **πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* in the *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. (cf. 6:332) Here we differ from the traditional view that the “Spirit” refers to the “Holy Spirit.” The context is easily noticed when we are stripped of the traditional theological garb. The body’s counterpart of animation is the “spirit” breath of G-d. The use of **πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* is frequently a synonym for the מָהנְשָׁ soul of man. Therefore, we translate **πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* in the truest sense of the word as “spirit” with no reference to the “Holy Spirit” as a “member of the G-dhead.” We must further assert that Judaism never has and never will have an idea of a “trinity.” [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. **Καλέω** – *kaleo* the verb “called” and the noun **κλῆσις** – *klesis* in the present pericope must be understood from the Hebrew **קָרָא**, which have the idea of being summoned. However, the truest sense of the word **καλέω** – *kaleo* / **קָרָא** is the idea of being made aware of G-d’s presence. The word **קָרָא** also carries the connotation of being summoned. Here two possible meanings conjoin in one concept. To be “called” is to be made aware of G-d’s presence and then to be summoned into His presence. This “call” can only be experienced when one accepts the yoke of the Kingdom/Governance of G-d through the Bate Din and the Hakhamim as opposed to human Kings/Presidents. Those who reject the Kingdom/Governance of G-d can never be invited into His presence or into His community. Ramban. (2008). *The Torah; with Ramban’s Commentary Translated, Annotated, and Elucidated,* (Vol. Sefer Vayikra). Artscroll Series, Mesorah Publications ltd. p. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. **ἐλπίς** – *elpis* is NOT “hope” in the western sense of the word. **ἐλπίς** – *elpis* (hope) finds its parallel in two Hebrew words. The first being **בָּטַח** which means “trust” with a sense of security, confidence and safety. The second Hebrew word is most likely the word Hakham Shaul would have used. **תִּקְוָה** meaning eager expectation. **תִּקְוָה** is also associated with the “miqveh” making a play on words in Hebrew when we read in the next verse of being **βάπτισμα** – *baptisma,* which means, “immersed.” [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. We consistently translate **κύριος** – *kurios* contextually. In those contexts where the writer refers to Yeshua as **κύριος** – *kurios,* he is not referring to deity. **κύριος** – *kurios* is a honorary title of respect. For those who must argue the point we suggest a thorough study of the word **κύριος** – *kurios* where it will be noted that **κύριος** – *kurios* is used of men, angels slave owners etc. Contextually we reverence Yeshua HaMashiach as our “Master” just as Yeshua’s talmidim did. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. **Πίστις** – *pistis*, is used nearly 490 times in the Nazarean Codicil. In those 490 times **πίστις** – *pistis*, refers to two major thoughts surrounding the word. The first is “fidelity” i.e. faithfulness or as we generally translate **πίστις –** *pistis***,** “faithful obedience.” The other major use of **πίστις** – *pistis*, is that of assurance. Because we are constrained by the hermeneutic of context, we must translate **πίστις** – *pistis*, as “assurance.” However, assurance only comes on the heels of “faithful obedience.” [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. By “initial”, we mean that when the Gentile converts to Judaism he is “immersed” as a token of his new life. However, when the Gentile has become Jewish all the laws of ritual purity become applicable whereupon he is subject to many immersions. Thielman interprets this **βάπτισμα** – *baptisma,* as an indication of the process of conversion. “It is perhaps best to think of One Baptism as a shorthand expression for the whole conversion, summarized by reference to the visible ritual.” Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. p. 259 Here we find a reference to conversion to Judaism, not conversion to “Christianity!” [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. It is easy enough to recognize the Shema in this single short phrase. This actually debunks the Trinitarian thesis in two words. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The four-fold phrase Father, in, through and above reiterates G-d’s omnipresence. However, we see in this passage the understanding that G-d’s agenda is being worked in all of creation. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. cf. Rom 8:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. This verse relates to Moshe when he ascended the mountain and was given by G-d, not only the Torah, but also the ability to share his given gifts to men in the form of the 70 Elders of Israel and Joshua (a figure of Yeshua). Conversely, Yeshua as the second Moshe (Deut. 18:15) relives this experience again, and reinvigorates these gifts which were temporarily weakened because of the multitude of sins amongst our people. The first gift, which we must acknowledge is Matan HaTorah – the gift of the Torah. Moshe Rabbenu (Moses our Teacher) brought down from Har Sinai the most precious gift for all humanity, i.e. the Torah. Then Moshe, establishing the Messianic pattern gave of himself to the seventy. In the same way that Moshe established a hierarchal system of Theocratic Government Yeshua reinforced this same principle. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Ascension “on high” here is in reference to Yeshua must be allegorical at minimum. The “ascension” of Yeshua is after his resurrection. While some theologians will suggest that these “gifts” were “poured out” at Shavuot/Pentecost with the so-called “outpouring of the Holy Spirit” we cannot agree with this line of thought. We will not argue at length the truth that the “Holy Spirit” is in fact the Breathing of the Mesorah. The anniversary date of Matan HaTorah is Shavuot/Pentecost. Therefore, if Yeshua gave “gifts to men” like Moshe Rabbenu, the first gift MUST be the Torah! Secondly, he can establish the unified community through the 10 Officers of the congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. What has been deemed the “Five-fold Ministry” by Christian theologians is an Ecclesiology that has existed in the Jewish Esnoga (Synagogue) for millennia. This Ecclesiology is a structured order of seven men. There are three Parnasim (pastors) that occupy the office. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Within Rabbinic Judaism as it developed in Talmudic and post-Talmudic times, the concept of tradition took on an added significance, reflected in the general term ***masoret***, a word based on the biblical Hebrew root *˓SR*, meaning to bind or imprison. This root yields the biblical Hebrew term ***masoret*,** found at Ezek. 20:37, which refers to the “bond of the covenant”﻿ into which God promises to return the rebellious people of Israel. This sense of the term tradition, as a bond or fetter that assures correct practice of the law, appears as well in Rabbinic sources. Aqiba in particular, calls tradition a “fence around the Torah” (M. Ab. 3:13), reflecting the frequent implementation of restrictive measures that assure compliance with the actual word of the Torah. Tradition, in this interpretation, protects people from violating the Torah. The Septuagint for this verse reads, “I will let you go in by number.” RSV here translates the Greek rather than the Hebrew. On this term, see Francis Brown, et al., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, reprint, 1974), p. 64, s.v., *msrt*. Neusner, J., Neusner, J., Avery-Peck, A. J., Green, W. S., & Museum of Jewish Heritage (New York, N. Y. (2000). *The encyclopaedia of Judaism*. May 2001. Vol. 3 p. 1462 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. The standard medieval Hebrew term for this genre is ***derashah***; the most common term for the one who delivers the sermon is ***darshan***; the verb “to preach” is ***li-derosh***. All three words are linked with the biblical root meaning, “to seek, demand, investigate.” The same root provides the word *midrash*, used in Rabbinic literature to indicate a mode of study focusing on careful interpretation of a biblical verse, the interpretation itself, and the literary work containing a collection of such interpretations. Neusner, J., Neusner, J., Avery-Peck, A. J., Green, W. S., & Museum of Jewish Heritage (New York, N. Y. (2000). *The encyclopaedia of Judaism*. May 2001. Vol. 3 p. 1320 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. cf. 1 Corinthians 12:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. **καταρτισμός** – *katartismos* being able to meet the demands of the ministry within the Esnoga. This also refers to order. Therefore, the “perfecting of the Saints” means to bring social order to the Congregation. The root **ἄρτιος** is used in mathematics as the basic principle in numbers and partly one of the ten basic principles. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. cf. Abot 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Heb. ben Elohim – the judge, i.e. Messiah [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. **τέλειος** – *teleios,* **Goal** is translated in various ways. Sometimes it is translated in a way that seems to annul the Torah. cf Rom. 10:4 which is usually translated… “(Rom. 10:4) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” This verse, correctly translated… (Rom. 10:4) **For Messiah is the GOAL (τέλειος – *teleios*) of the Torah for righteousness/generosity to everyone who is faithfully obedient**. Therefore, we define maturity as the “Goal” and being like Messiah, and to possess his relationship to the Torah/Mesorah! [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. **πλήρωμα** – *pleroma* full of Messiah. Or we might here say that we must be full of Messiah’s Mesorah. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. While the Greek word **πνεῦμα** – *pneuma* carries the connotations of the Hebrew word **רוּח, πνεῦμα –** *pneuma* does not perfectly match **רוּח.** Therefore, Hakham Shaul uses **ἄνεμος** – *anemos.* This is partly because the Remes analogy that he is positing is that of a ship being tossed by wind and wave. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. The power of the Ten (3+7) men is given for the building up of the Congregation. The individual officers each have their place and purpose. Therefore, the collegiate officers in unity protect the Congregation against deception. This unified group of officers has protected the Jewish people for millennia against many types of deception. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Messiah as the “head” (chief) is both source and goal of any Congregation. As noted above… **τέλειος** – *teleios,* **Goal** is translated in various ways. Sometimes it is translated in a way that seems to annul the Torah. cf Rom. 10:4 which is usually translated… “(Rom. 10:4) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” This verse, correctly translated… (Rom. 10:4) **For Messiah is the GOAL (τέλειος – *teleios*) of the Torah for righteousness/generosity to everyone who is faithfully obedient**. Therefore, we define maturity as the “Goal” and being like Messiah, and to possess his relationship to the Torah/Mesorah! [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Hakham Shaul’s language vacillates between a physical body and its joints and an Edifice i.e. Temple of Living Stones. Here the idea of building and polishing built stones. It also has the connotation of making a mosaic. This establishes a Congregation’s relationship with each other and with Messiah.

    The context (vv. 7–10, 11–16) shows that the participles συναρμολογούμενον and συμβιβαζόμενον﻿﻿ are designed to emphasize strongly the interplay of the different ministries and tasks within the body: “from whom the whole body—as one which is fitted and held together by each link which serves to support it—corresponding to the activity appropriate to each part achieves growth of the body to the building up of itself in love.” *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 7:856 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Here we connect the joint meaning of the Hebrew **אהבה** – *ahavah* and the Greek word **ἀγάπη** – *agape.* The resultant translation then becomes “loving-compassion” in a charitable environment.  [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. **περιπατέω** – *peripateo* is used here twice to call the Gentile to Torah observance, meaning Hakham Shaul demands the acceptance of the Halakhah (613 mitzvot) as taught and expounded upon by the Hakhamim. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. **ματαιότης** – *mataiotes*  mental futility or vanity. This means that the Gentile who rejects the Torah, 613 Mitzvot and the teachings of the Hakhamim are aimless conducting lifestyles of futility. This futility has captured their minds holding them ransom. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Hakham Shaul now apprises us of the opposing mental disposition. Not only is it a mental disposition, it is the direct opposition to the Torah, the 613 Mitzvot and the Hakhamim. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. **ἀπαλλοτριόω** – *apallotriou* has the sense of being “hostile.” [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Morally bereft of all sensible mores. The depth of this statement is only understood from a Hebraic mindset. To be **כָּרַת** – *karat*, “cut off” means completely estranged from G-d’s presence and protection. Those who were “cut off” while traveling through the wilderness were subjected to every evil influence, without G-d’s protection or chesed/grace. Therefore, this is a crime of excommunication by Divine Decree. Here we can see the gravity of moral purposelessness. There are those people who believe that the idle mind of secular entertainment is harmless. However, this idle purposelessness is “opposition” to the Torah, which presents the “goal of Messiah” before us a s standard of life. Life in Messiah has the purpose of recapturing the mission of Adam HaRishon. Adam HaRishon shows the ability to capture the essence of each creature on the earth. Nevertheless, the goal was to apprehend the essence of G-d Himself. Herein, Hakham Shaul in this letter to the Ephesian Congregation sets this goal before them in the pattern of the ten men (3 Dinim – Judges and 7 Paqidim) of the congregation. Why did Adam HaRishon and his spouse Chava cover themselves with a fig leaf? Was this an attempt to “hide” from the Omni Presence of G-d? Their new “awareness” was the sentience of the state of being **כָּרַת** – *karat*, “cut off.” Therefore, they saw that they were without G-d’s protection in the Garden. Covering themselves with a fig leaf has many So’od connotations. The most simplistic explanation is that they wanted to camouflage themselves primarily from G-d but the other animals of the earth that would now pursue them as a food source. The human mind/soul is preprogramed with the capacity to perceive G-d. When we deviate from the Torah and the teachings of the Hakhamim, this is impossible. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. This is an unyielding mind devoted to opposing G-d and G-dly truth/practice. Its dealings are strict, harsh cruel and merciless. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature.* [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. This is the result of being “cut off” from G-d. The language uses terms of sexual impropriety as an allegorical way of telling us that the person or persons are bereft of G-d or any ethical mores. *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 1:490 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. In much of the Nazarean Codicil, demonic possession is associated with ritual impurity. While, Hakham Tsefet (Peter the wise) learned at Caesarea not to call Gentiles unclean, those who vehemently oppose the Torah are in some way subjected to unclean Shedim. This is not to say that all Gentiles are “unclean,” G-d forbid. Rather it is noteworthy to mention that direct opposition against the Torah, as a way of life is the mission of two-thirds of the shedim / fallen angels. Therefore, the darkened mind refers to those Gentiles who are either simply ignorant of the Torah as a way of life, and, those who are vehemently opposed to it because of their “**unyielding obstinacy of mind.**” Hakham Shaul’s view of the Gentile in Ephesians is the same as his view in his Letter to the Romans 1:18-32. Here Hakham Shaul takes the position that the lack of ability to comprehend G-d is a willful opposition against the Torah/G-d. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)